



**FERN SOCIETY
OF VICTORIA**

NEWSLETTER

DATE JUNE '80
VOLUME 2
NUMBER 5

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EDITOR: Keith Hutchinson, 17 Grandview Grove, Rosanna, 3084. Tel. 459 9716 (A.H.)

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

Our Demonstration Night at the last meeting proved to be very popular. We started off the evening with a short talk on Maricopa, our Guest Speaker, Stewart Sharples, General Manager for Rite-Gro generously donated a carton of Nutricote to the Society. This was used for additional prizes for the special effort.

As most members are totally unaware of how ferns are judged, Glad Andrews spoke and then answered queries on the point scoring of ferns.

Norma Stafford spoke on floral arrangements incorporating ferns, donating two arrangements to the Society for the special effort.

I then gave a talk and short demonstration on how I make up hanging baskets, and Albert Jenkins concluded the evening with a short segment, pointing out the advantages of making your own compost.

Entries were down in the competition this month, perhaps because the fern chosen is not commonly grown. The winners were:

Novice Section

1st - Betty Allgood
2nd - Chris Anderson
Equal 3rd - O. Wellard
M. Healey

Open Section

1st - Mavis Bryant
2nd - George Lee Kim
3rd - Miss C. Goudey

The ferns chosen for next month's competition are a tassell fern and a birds nest fern. Originally, only a tassell fern was chosen, but because it is not commonly cultivated, we decided to add a birds nest fern as well.

Our bus trip to the Otway Ranges was a fantastic success; everyone thoroughly enjoyed themselves.

We have another excursion planned for 14th June, to Sassafras Creek in the Dandenongs.

Come in your own car, bring lunch, and we will meet at Seabecks Reserve on the Monbulk Road at 10.00 a.m. Travelling from Kallista to Monbulk, this is the first picnic ground on the left, just past the "Lyrebird Lodge".

We can spend several hours exploring the ferns along Sassafras Creek, on well-graded walking tracks, and then have lunch at the picnic ground. After lunch we could move on to another area, winding up at Irene and Ted Bolster's house for afternoon tea.

Rod Hill has made up five pages of notes giving directions to all the ferns along Sassafras Creek; these will be on sale on the day at 20¢ per copy.

If a ten- or eleven-day fern tour of the South Island of New Zealand in June of next year (approximate cost \$400 per person) would interest you, then keep early June, 1981, free.

The \$400 would include return air fares from Melbourne, a tourist coach and overnight accommodation, but not meals. Meal arrangements will be made - more details later.

CHRIS GOUDEY
President

SECRETARY'S REPORT:

As is mentioned in my report on our field trip to the Otways (printed further on in this issue of the Newsletter), there are several Nurseries in that area which specialise in local ferns. In response to several requests, I have listed here the names and addresses of those we visited, plus two others with good stocks of local ferns.

Fay Culton, of P. & F. Culton, Ocean Road, Lavers Hill, Vic. Ph. 052 37 3253

Chris & Joy Wilkinson, at Wylangta, R.S.D. Beech Forest. Ph. 052 37 3261

Brian Harrington, of Green Gully Ferneries, Johanna, Vic. Ph. 052 37 4217
(AH) 052 37 4232

George & Joy Evans, of Ocean Road Ferneries, Johanna, Vic. Ph. 052 37 4242

Do telephone before going down, to make sure that they are open. As fellow members, you will be made to feel most welcome.

As this field trip proved so popular, we should follow it up with more - if any member knows of suitable spots for field trips, please let me know.

Our May meeting proved to be most interesting, with five different speakers and a variety of demonstrations. As much of the programme for the meeting was essentially visual, it is a little more difficult to summarise it for those members who could not be present.

Mr. Sharples, of Rite-Gro, gave a talk on Nutricote and its uses as a plant food, with special emphasis on the type suitable for palms and ferns. He demonstrated the benefits of using this product for long term feeding of ferns, and his generous gift of containers of Nutricote was appreciated by members - especially by those who won them as prizes in the special effort!

Glad Andrews then explained how marks are awarded in the monthly competitions, and gave the following judging categories and their maximum scores:

1. First impression	5 marks	7. Degree of difficulty	
2. Colour	10 marks	in growing	10 marks
3. Shape	10 marks	8. Fullness of growth	10 marks
4. Size	10 marks	9. New growth	10 marks
5. Completeness of fronds	10 marks	10. Presentation	10 marks
6. Symmetry	5 marks	11. Fern/Container ratio	10 marks

Norma Stafford showed some most attractive floral compositions using fern fronds, and then explained how such arrangements can be achieved.

Chris Goudey demonstrated how to line and fill a hanging basket, using slices of treefern as a liner. This medium is particularly good for baskets containing ferns, as it holds moisture.

This was followed by a short talk by Albert Jenkins on the making of good compost, and all members present at the meeting found the presentations enjoyable and the knowledge gained valuable.

IRENE BOLSTER
Secretary

TREASURER'S REPORT:

Income for the month included fares and lunch for the Otways trip, donations, subscriptions, special effort and plant sales, and totalled \$493.00.

Expenses were as follows: Badges for Committee \$29.90, Secretarial expenses for three months - postage, telephone, and \$20 for mailbox rent \$48, Magazine expenses \$204.92, Lunches paid for Otway trip \$100.80, Hire of hall \$20, leaving a balance of \$514.80. From this is still to be deducted Hire of bus for Otway trip - approximately \$330. Balance \$184.80.

ALBERT JENKINS
Treasurer

FERN OF THE MONTH - BRISTLY SHIELD FERN (*Lastreopsis hispida* (hairy))

An exceedingly beautiful fern, easily recognised by its finely dissected fronds and the excessive hairiness of the stipe.

The Bristly Shield Fern is a common lowland fern of New Zealand, where it often covers large areas of open bush land. In Australia, this fern has been recorded from Tasmania, New South Wales and Victoria, where it usually occurs in deep rainforest. Rare in New South Wales and Tasmania, *Lastreopsis hispida* has been recorded from the Dandenong Ranges, Teenak along the Bunyip River, and at Healesville. It also occurs in the Otway Ranges, where it is quite common in several areas.

This fern usually grows in very wet boggy soil or on rotting logs, or the butts of Treeferns such as the Soft Tree Fern, *Dicksonia antarctica* and always in the company of Antarctic Beech trees, *Nothofagus cunninghamii*.

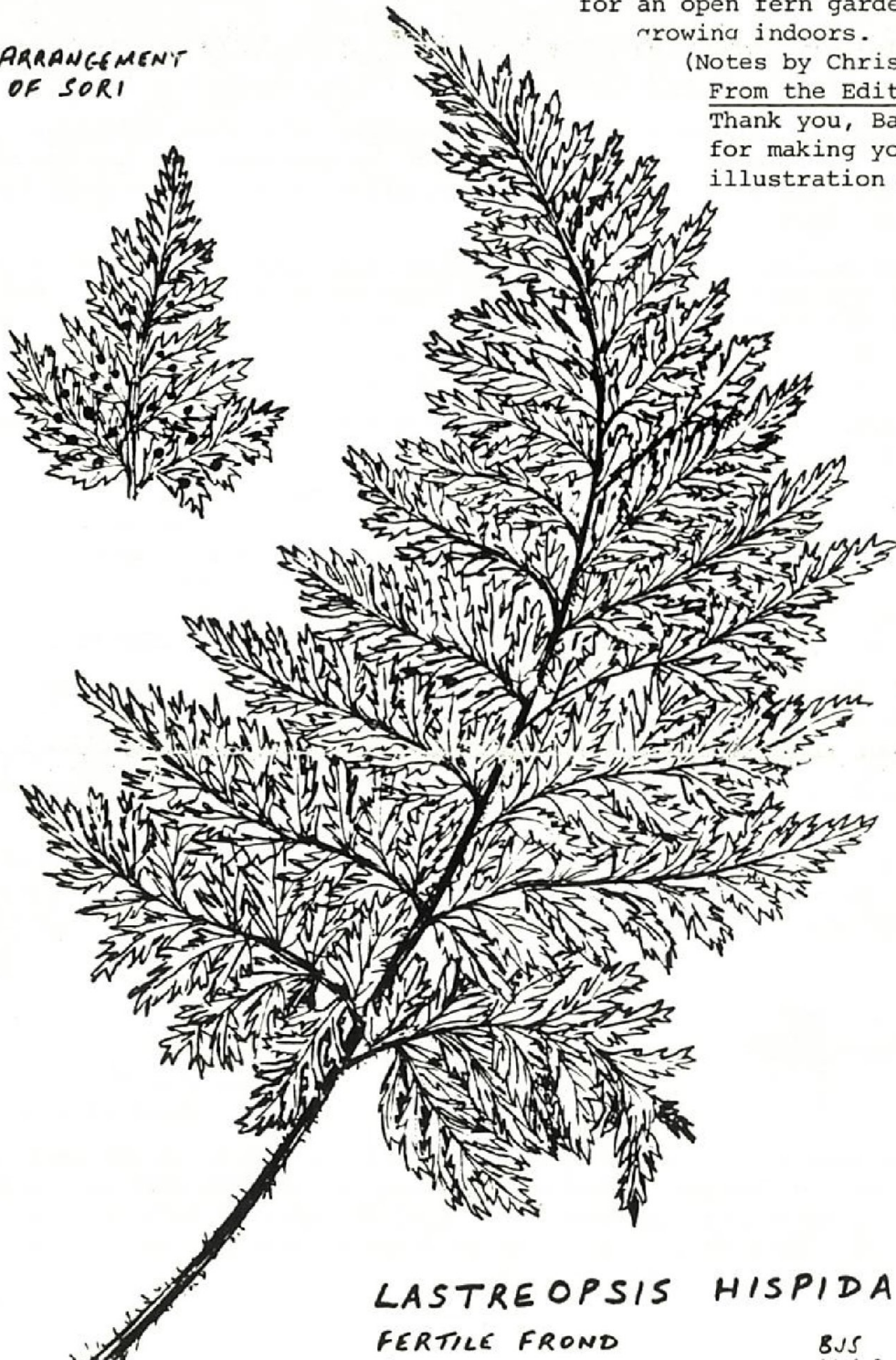
Cultivation: This fern is not difficult to cultivate, provided it is given a cool humid position free from direct sunlight and draughts. It likes an acid soil 4.5 pH, and does extremely well in a large treefern log with a peaty mix. I find it does well in a fairly dark corner in a fernery or glasshouse. It is not suitable for an open fern garden or for growing indoors.

(Notes by Chris Goudey)

From the Editor:

Thank you, Barry Stagoll,
for making your excellent
illustration available!

ARRANGEMENT
OF SORI



LASTREOPSIS HISPIDA
FERTILE FROND

In the semi-darkness of early morning, Albert finally had everyone on board, and all went well until a tyre blowout near Lara caused some delay for a while. Not to worry, though - tyre changed, on went the bus through Geelong and Forrest, eventually arriving at the beginning of Turtons Track not so very far behind the other bus which had brought the contingent from South Australia.

The road through the forest here has some really magnificent specimens of Tree ferns, etc., and it was most interesting to drive along and find fresh vistas at each turn of the road.

The forest gradually gives way to open country near Beech Forest (one of the earliest mill towns in the district), and we drove on to Lavers Hill, following the top of the ridge of the Otway Ranges (1,800 ft high or thereabouts, with a 90" annual rainfall, and one particular settlement often having the dubious honour of being the wettest place in the state. Not that day, though - a beautiful warm Autumn day, and never a cloud in the sky!

Lunch had been organised by the ladies at Lavers Hill, and many appreciative comments were passed on the tasty sandwiches and home-made cakes. Not only did we have our fellow-members from South Australia, but we were also joined by a group from the Foothills Group of S.C.A.P. We all enjoyed each other's company, and we all had the chance to learn something of each other's interests.

The buses then took us off to Melba Gully - a natural Fern Gully, containing many varieties of ferns; this area had been given to the National Parks Service a few years ago by a local resident, so that all could enjoy its beauties. We were lucky to be joined there by Fred Haala, the Ranger, who pointed out many plants of interest that we may have missed. She showed us the "Big Tree" - 72 ft. around the butt - which has survived several bush fires but which, as big trees go, is not so big. There are records of trees in this area which, such was their size, they have been put to various uses when their bases were hollowed out. They have made fantastically dry houses, stables, a church and even used as the grandstand at Beech Forest Races.

Several people purchased ferns from a nursery at Lavers Hill, and when it was learnt that it was not possible to visit the other nursery as planned, members were pleased to hear that there was yet another fernery where local ferns could be purchased. As it was, it took quite a little while to pack all the purchases in the buses! One of the Nursery owners gave a demonstration of cutting a plant pot from a section of a Tree fern trunk. We were fascinated to see how quickly he shaped it and levelled it off into a most attractive container.

From there we drove to the "Beauty Spot", which is a short length of the Ocean Road now bypassed, and now opened to the public to show some of the natural fern gullies which lie on each side of the road. It is hard to believe that only seven years ago, this was a main road. Nature takes over very quickly, and soon covers up man-made scars.

By that time, footsteps were beginning to slow, and we returned to our respective coaches, glad of the rest to come. Goodbyes were said, many expressing a wish to come and see more another time, and off went the S.A. coach heading for Colac and a welcome night's rest. (They had travelled in the coach all Friday night!) The Victorian coach turned its back on the sun and the blue sky which had given the lie to tales of continuous rain in the Otways.

I am told it was very quiet on the drive to Melbourne, but so many have said how much they enjoyed the day, we must start planning another day soon.

Maxicrop

The world's first 100% organic liquid seaweed plant food.



Maxicrop is marketed in Australia by:

R.A. BELL-BOOTH & CO. (Aust.) P/L

VICTORIA: 4/375 Bayswater Road, Bayswater,
Vic. 3153. Phone: Melb. (03) 720 2200.
P.O. Box 302, Bayswater Vic. 3153.

NEW SOUTH WALES: 4th Floor, 309 Pitt Street,
Sydney, NSW 2000. Phone: (02) 235 8100.



PATHOLOGY DEPARTMENT:

by IAN BUCKMASTER

Home Gardens

Do you have ferns in the home garden that are not enjoying life because of poor drainage? Ferns like moisture, but they also like to be well drained.

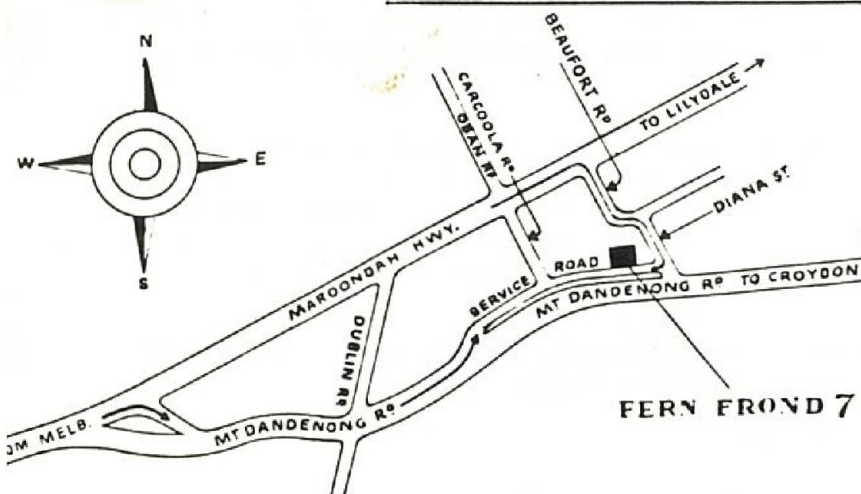
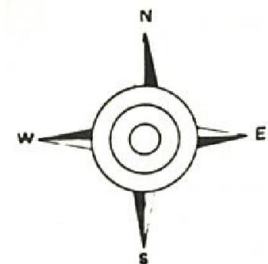
The easiest way to drain the bed is to build it up. Ferns may be lifted out and stored in a cool non-draughty position during the winter period, while you either lay drains or build up the bed along the sides. When tackling this job, it is wise to buy in all the materials needed first.

First, dig the old puggy soil out. Sweeten it with limestone, and it is suitable for use elsewhere in the garden. Bring in a mix of compost, leaf mould, old wood chips, sawdust, crushed pine material, or bark. Add some mountain soil, and sand, and you should have a good permeable mix for growing all the hardy ferns. When placing the tired old and sick ferns back in the ground, surround them closely with a special mix of mountain soil, sandy loam, peatmoss and fern fibre, to give them a good start.

Cut back all the fronds, spray the stump with Benelate fungicide and then plant. Do not feed sick ferns until September. In September, you can feed them with half strength fertilizer.

Make sure that at all times the slugs and snails are kept out of the area.

If your fern does not respond favourably by October/November, remove it, and the immediate surrounding soil, and replant with another fern.



Fern & Native orchid specialists,
indoor plants, hanging baskets.

SPORE LIST - JUNE, 1980

Spore samples may be purchased at monthly meetings, or by sending a list of your requirements, with stamped self-addressed envelope, plus a 20¢ stamp for each species requested, to Mr. R. Hill, 41 Kareela Road, Frankston, Vic., 3199.

SPORE VARIETIES AVAILABLE:

- | | |
|--|--|
| Adiantum caudatum (4-80) | Cyclosorus truncatus (12-79) |
| A. concinnum (10-79) | C. sp. (4-80) |
| A. gracillimum (3-80) | ✓ Cystopteris fragilis (2-80) |
| A. hispidulum (3-80) | Dicksonia antarctica (11-79) |
| A. mathewsii (3-80) | D. squarrosa (1-80) |
| ✓ Aglaomorpha meyeniana (12-79) | Dryopteris aemula (?) |
| ✓ Angiopteris palmiformis (12-79) | D. crassirhizoma (8-77) |
| ✓ Arachniodes aristata variegata (2-80) | D. sp. (Japan) (4-30) |
| Asplenium flabellibolium (2-80) | ✓ Lastreopsis hispida (4-80) |
| Athyrium australe (3-80) | ✓ L. marginans (12-79) |
| A. japonicum (4-80) | L. shepherdii (12-79) |
| A. japonicum (Taiwan) (?) | L. tinarooensis (1-80) |
| ✓ Blechnum ambiguum (1-80) | Leptopteris fraseri (1-80) |
| B. articulatum (11-79) | Llavea cordifolia (11-79) |
| B. brasiliense (12-79) | Matteuccia orientalis (?) |
| B. cartilagineum (12-79) | M. struthiopteris (12-79) |
| B. chambersii (3-80) | ✓ Nephrolepis hirsutula (4-80) |
| ✓ B. discolor (12-79) | ✓ Osmunda regalis (contorted) (12-79) |
| B. fluviatile (3-80) | Pellaea falcata nana (12-79) |
| B. gibbum (4-80) | Platynerium coronarium (12-79) |
| B. orientale (12-79) | P. holttumii (12-79) |
| B. penna-marina (1-80) | Polypodium aureum glaucum (1-80) |
| B. vulcanicum (3-80) | P. vulgare (10-78) |
| B. wattsii (4-80) | Polystichum aculeatum (2-80) |
| B. sp. (King Is.) (12-79) | P. australiense (2-80) |
| ✓ Cheilanthes distans (2-80) | P. braunii (8-78) |
| ✓ C. tenuifolia (11-79) | P. formosum (12-79) |
| Christella dentata (2-80) | P. lentum (3-79) |
| ✓ Cibotium schiedei (12-78) | P. munitum (11-79) |
| Colysis ampla (1-80) | P. proliferum (2-80) |
| ✓ Culcita dubia (3-80) | P. scopulinum ('78) |
| Cyathea australis (2-80) | P. setiferum (3-80) |
| C. baileyana (3-80) | P. sp. 'Falcatum type' (?) |
| C. brownii (2-80) | Pteris blumeana (12-79) |
| C. callosa (12-79) | ✓ P. comans (1-80) |
| C. contaminans (12-79) | P. tremula (12-79) |
| C. cooperi (1-80) | P. tripartita (12-79) |
| C. cunninghamii (2-80) | Rumohra adiantiformis (5-79) |
| ✓ C. dealbata (2-80) | Sphaerostephanos taiwanensis (8-79) |
| C. integra (12-78) | ✓ Sticherus lobatus (2-80) |
| C. medullaris & smithii (6-79) | Todea barbara (2-80) |
| C. regeccae (8-79) | Treeferns (mixed Cyatheas - |
| C. woollsiana (8-79) | subgen. Sphaeropteris) |
| C. sp. (Borneo) (?) | |
| C. sp. (Taiwan) (11-79) | |

From the Editor:

I would love to hear from members of the Society, so how about sharing ideas, queries, comments on the newsletter (critical or complimentary) and any suggestions you may have.

- DIARY DATES -

JUNE 12th, 1980 - Chris Goudey will speak about his recent holiday on Lord Howe Island, and hopes to have some slides to show.

8 p.m.
Burnley Horticultural School Hall,
Burnley

JULY 10th, 1980 - Gary Laws
(Guest Speaker)

AUGUST 14th, 1980 - Annual General Meeting

Note: In the event of a power strike on the evening of any meeting, we regret that the meeting must be cancelled.