FERN newsle

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PUBLICITY OFFICER: Geoff Echberg, 1 Railway Parade, Highett, 3190. Tel. 555 5115

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

It is good to slow down again after a fortnight in Tasmania and a rushed trip to North Queensland.

Albert Jenkins and I left on Tuesday, 11th May to spend two to three weeks in North Queensland; both being drivers we were able to drive non stop.

We saw an abundance of Platycerium veitchii (the Silver Elk) on the rocks, and many other uncommon and rare ferns including Ampelopteris prolifera and Angioptevis erecta (Queensland King Fern). Six different species of adiantum were noted including A. capillus venerus and A. sylvaticum.

We left the same afternoon, pushing further north. Thursday evening we arrived at Babinda (approx. 50 kms. south of Cairns) and the following morning (Friday) we spent several hours climbing up a mountain stream on the eastern slopes of Mt. Bartle Frere where we came across an abundance of ferns such as Humata repens, (Dwarf Hare's Foot) Microsorium membranifolium (Pimple Fern) Cyathea woolsiana, and rare ferns such as Asplenium baileyanum and A. affire. It was interesting to see Antrophyum reticulatum (Ox-tongue fern) and A. plantagineum growing on almost dry rock faces. These two ferns are almost impossible to cultivate away from their natural environment.

Saturday we met with fern friends on the table lands and made plans for a two-day climb to the top of Mt. Bartle Frere (Queensland's highest mountain) in search of Leptopteris frazeri (Crepe Fern). We left the following day after a very wet night; the track to the western face of the mountain was steep and extremely muddy even for our fourwheel drive vehicle. By the time we started to climb the rain was thundering down and strong winds were breaking limbs off the high rain forest trees and sending them crashing to the ground.

We were on the edge of a cyclone.

After a short while it was decided that we should call the hike off, so it was back to the car for a deleeching. We were quite disappointed.

We spent the next two days soaking wet but thoroughly enjoying ourselves, climbing through rainforest in the Palmerston Valley and the Tinaroo Hills and many other interesting places. We saw an abundance of tree ferns such as Cyathea robertsiana, C. celebica, C. woolsiana, C. baileyana, C. rebeccae and Dicksonia youngiae. Beautiful fine ferns such as Lastreopsis tinerooensis, L. grayii and the beautiful Oenotrichia tripinnata, and many others.

***** Our speaker for our July meeting will be Dr. John French, from the C.S.I.R.O. His subject will be "Does Forestry Management Protect Flora Habitat?", and a most interesting evening is assured.

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is hereby given that the Third Annual General Meeting of the Fern Society of Victoria will be held on Thursday August 12th, 8.00 p.m. at the School Hall, Burnley College, Swan Street, Burnley. Business transacted will be:

- To receive and deal with the Executive Committee's Report for the twelve months ending 30th June, 1982.
- 2. To receive and deal with the Treasurer's Report.
- 3. To discuss, and if adopted, amend the Constitution of the Fern Society of Victoria with the following recommendations of the Executive Committee:
 - (a) President's Term of Office
 That a President's term of office be limited to three years at any one time and that the retiring President be appointed Immediate Past President, this new position to become an ex officio member of the Executive Committee.
 - (b) Dissolution of the Society
 In event of the Society being disbanded, the assets and property after payment of all just debts and liabilities shall not be distributed to members but shall be distributed to a fund or funds with similar objects and/or to a fund or funds exclusively for charitable purposes.

Note: Proposed amendment (b) is a requested alteration from the Raffles & Bingo Permits Board in order for the Fern Society of Victoria to conduct raffles.

- 4. Election of Office Bearers for 1982/1983
- 5. General Business

K.N. STUBBS, SECRETARY

A series of demonstrations from members of the Society will follow the Annual General Meeting.

ON FINANCE

Our Treasurer, Jean Trudgeon, reports that as at 31st May, 1982, the bank balance stood at \$2,373.76 CR., with a further \$2,000 on fixed deposit.



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The following crossword puzzle has been supplied by Mrs. Diana Crumpler of Rochester, Victoria. I found it excellent and hope she will help with another at some future date. Sincere thanks to Diana.

We will enclose solution next month.

FERN CROSSWORD PUZZLE

by Diana F. Crumpler

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DOW	<u>v</u> .
1.	An important constituent of your fern potting mix.
2.	A genus of treefern, commonly sold in Victorian nurseries.
3.	This character may steal your champion fern.
4.	Watch out for this little visitor, as he may bring scale with him.
5.	A species of blechnum, sometimes classified as a lomaria.
6.	You may have to do this to a diseased fern.
8.	Some very fancy ferns are known as ferns.
10. 12.	The leaves of cyrtomium falcatum resemble this tree. A genus of ferns with fascinating furry feet.
14.	Centre.
15.	A species of asplenium which can be propagated very easily.
17.	A large genus of ferns, with a fishbone leaf arrangement.
18.	Letters often added to a surname when making a botanical classification
20.	A genus of ferns which includes stags and elks.
22.	You will need these to buy ferns in Japan.
26.	Most ferns prefer the soil to be slightly
27.	You will remove these from your fern pots.
28.	The fronds of Antrophyum reticulatum resemble the tongue of an
30.	Climbing, twining growth habit.
31. 38.	A simple frond without incision or division.
39.	Stipe. Fertile fronds of Belvisia have a pointed at the apex of the frond
40.	The growth of cyatheas and dicksonias make them resemble a small .
41.	The natural growing medium for most plants.
43.	A free draining soil type.
44.	Davallia rhizomes resemble the feet of a
45.	Fern Society Members often go on a to observe ferns.
47.	A spray based on this will kill scale insects and mealy bugs.
ACRO	<u>ss</u>
1.	The fronds of Doryopteris Pedata resemble the shape of a
3.	The new golden boston dancer has one of these.
7.	Common meaning of falcate.
9.	Botannical word for nest.
11.	Ferns of the Gleichenia genus are known at ferns.
13.	The fertile fronds of the Schizaea genus resemble a
16.	A little plantlet which develops on the fronds of some fern species.
19. 21.	A family of ferns commonly known as the spleenworts. The asparagus 'fern' belongs to this family.
23.	Dryopteris Filix - mas is known as the fern.
24.	Means small.
25.	Histriopteris Incisa is known as a 's wing fern.
29.	Not very big.
32.	Asplenium Bulbiferum is often called and chicken fern.
33.	To place in a horizontal position.
	Opposite to out.
35. 36.	Common name for the nephrolepsis family.
37.	After the meeting people may like to do this for a while. Tectarias will produce these on the fronds.
38.	Not a very welcome insect in the fernery.
12.	A Country with a large number of fern enthusiasts.
14.	Most ferns will not appreciate this type of weather.
16.	Ferns not native to Australia.
	An adiantum is commonly known as a
19.	Lygodium Japonicum has a habit.
50.	Although much needed in the rest of the garden this little creature
	can do nothing to help in the fernery.

49. 50.

AS IT WAS IN THE BEGINNING

"In the early days of plants taxomony (i.e. naming of plants) nearly all the ferns with brown sori (spores) were placed in the family Polypodium. As a result, the Polypodium family is one of the largest families of all - in fact it was the largest", said the June Speaker, President - Chris Goudey.

"Today the family consists of just under 1,000 species, most of which are tropical and sub-tropical. The family is divided up into 73 genera, which is 73 different sub-families", Chris said. "Fifteen of which are represented in Australia", he added.

The Polypodium family is constantly under revision and as a result they are splitting it up into different families or families of their own, or placing one into another. "All in all it is quite confusing", Chris said. He gave two examples of this; according to a recent classification he had just received is Grammitis (the little finger fern) and Dipteris. They have been placed into genera all of their own.

Chris brought along to the meeting 23 different genera and spoke a little on each one. We have selected a few for this month's report.

The first one was Dipteris conjugata. There are six different species and are all found throughout the tropics. They grow on clay banks in full sun. Dipteris conjugata is the only Australian species.

The next family Chris showed was Platycerium. "A lot of people might be surprised to learn that Platyceriums are actually Polypodiums", Chris told the meeting. "There are 18 different species. Four of them occur in Australia and these four Australian species are the hardiest ones of all. They will grow under pretty harsh conditions and grow outside in Victoria with a little bit of shelter. All the exotic species need the protection of a glasshouse with a minimum temperature of at least 60. They are quite unique in that they have hairs all over them called stellate hairs; that is they have a little tiny hair with a star shape protrusion on the end of it. These hairs are to cut down on moisture loss so that these ferns can grow in reasonably dry places.

Chris said that Stags and Elks usually grow pretty high up in the trees and in fairly exposed conditions in rainforests. Platycerium veitchii which is really an epiphytic fern grows in arid sand stone areas.

Another family of ferns closely related to Platyceriums are Pyrrosia. Chris proceeded to show two Pyrrosia in all but altogether there are about 100 different species of Pyrrosia throughout the world, with six different ones in Australia. There are quite a number of different cultivars and the Japanese ones are quite ornamental. Pyrrosia Lingua is a hardy species that comes from Japan, southeast Asia and Malaya and it grows at high altitudes.

The next one Chris showed was Drymoglossum, a genus which has only six species. These are closely related to Pyrrosia and have stellate hairs on them as well. They come from Madagasca, New Guinea, India and China. The one Chris showed was from the family Lennaphyllum. There are 8 different species of Lennaphyllum, and none are native to Australia.

There are 13 different species of Belvisia and they range from Africa, Ceylon and Malaya with one in Australia. This fern is commonly called the "Rats tail" as it has a long protrusion on the end.

Another very attractive fern shown was Selliguea feei (some call it Selliguea feeioides). It is another small family with 6 different species found in Malaya and the Pacific Islands. They have a beautiful hairy rhizome and typical Polypodium type spore.

Chris talked about another interesting species, Colysis. "There are 25 different species of Colysis which are very close in appearance to Microsorium, the Kangaroo Fern. They have the same sort of veins; the main difference is the shape of the spore", Chris said. "Microsorium has round spore and these have elongated spore. There are 2 different species in Australia", he added.

There are 40 known species of Microsorium - all Asiatic with 6 different species in Australia and one extra on Lord Howe Island. The most common, Microsorium scandens, which occurs along the east coast of Australia, can also be found in Gippsland. Another, Microsorium diversifolium, is often confused with Microsorium scandens. Quite a lot of Microsorium diversifolium get close to M. scandens but the main difference is that Microcorium diversifolium has a quite leathery frond. The spores are close to the margin on Microsorium versifolium and the veins are much more complex. Chris advised that it is best to consult Wakefield and have a look at the vein patterns. Another distinctive thing about Microsorium scandens is that if the frond is kept for a few days you will find that it has quite a distinct musk smell. That is why it is called the Fragrant Fern.

Microsorium punctatum, which grows through North Queensland, usually on boulders, was shown. Some very attractive cultivars have originated from this fern. One is called Grandiceps, another one Serratum. Microsorium Musisolium, found in Malaya, has beautiful veins. Most Microsorium species are epiphytes - some of them grow in the ground in very well drained positions over rocks and rotted logs.

Another member of the Polypodium family displayed was the Drynaria. This is quite a unique type of fern which has two different types of fronds. The first is a shield frond, which is the dead looking ones at the base. Their job is to collect the debris, (rotting leaves, dust and moisture that settles down around the rhizome and feed the plant). Then it puts up fertile fronds which produce the spore. The shield fronds do not last long as they grow up and go brown very quickly. There are 20 different species throughout the tropics and sub-tropics with three in Australia.

There are three other genera that are closely related, one is Aglaomorpha, another Merinthosorus and the third is pseudo Drynaria. These ferns are all quite similar and produce big rigid fronds. They grow high in the trees, collect debris in amongst the fronds which rots to feed the plant. There are 10 different species of Aglaomorpha and they all occur throughout Malaya. Aglaomorpha have a large hairy rhizome and they produce all their spore on the end of the frond. Half the frond is barren and the other half of the frond is fertile. As soon as the spore matures, the top end of the frond dies and it looks unattractive.

There are seven species of Phymatodes, another group shown by Chris. They come from Africa and Asia, and there are none in Australia, and until recently they were included in the Microsorium family.

One fern shown which was most interesting and has a swollen hollow rhizome belonged to the Lecanopteris genus. The rhizome is hollow and in its native habitat this rhizome is inhabited by ants. The fern provides shelter for the ants and the theory is that the ants provide minerals off their feet and also provide fertiliser with their excreta. So it has a symbiosis with ants. The fern will grow without the ants, but every fern growing in the wild is inhabited by these stinging ants.

One specimen which looked like grass was Scleroglossum wurunaran. It is a very small genus of fern that belongs in the Polypodium family and they usually grow on wet embankments, on clay or sometimes on the butts of trees.

During his talk, Chris showed other families. He stated that his aim was to bring along as many different families as he could so that members could become familiar with what they actually look like. This was greatly appreciated by the audience who also thanked him for the excellent talk and the equally excellent specimens shown.

And, it would not have been a Chris Goudey talk without some of his excellent slides. This time it was no different - he showed the meeting a few slides of his recent Tasmanian trip. Whilst not on the Polypodium family, they did show those at the meeting some of the Tasmanian rain forests and the outstanding hues of the various fungi.

WATER TIMERS

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SPORE LIST - Species in Short Supply - JULY:

Spore samples may be purchased at monthly meetings, or by sending a list of your requirements with 20 cents for each species requested <u>plus</u> 40 cents for packaging and postage to Mr. R. Hill, 41 Kareela Road, Frankston, 3199.

Payment for orders may be made by postage stamp (27 cent stamps preferred where possible) or by cheque (payable to "Fern Society of Victoria").

If ordering species from this list, please include a supplementary list in case supplies of some species are depleted. All species listed in the JUNE newsletter should still be available.

Instructions on propagation from spore are also still available for an extra 5 cents.

ADIANTUM AETHIOPICUM (1-81) CONCINNUM (10-79) HISPIDULUM (3-82) SYLVATICUM (8-80) ANOCRAMMA LEPTOPHYLLA (11-80) ARACHNIODES ARISTATA (8-80) ASPLENIUM TRICHOMANES (6-80) ATHYRIUM NIPONICUM 'PICTUM' (4-82) BLECHNUM MINUS (8-80) CHEILANTHES CALIFORNICA (6-80) CHRISTELLA PARASITICA (5-80) CIBOTIUM CUMINGII (10-80) REGALE (5-82) SCHIEDEI (12-79) CYATHEA HOWEANA (3-82) MANNIANA (?) PHYSOLEPIDOTA (7-81) ROBERTSIANA (12-80) CYCLOSORUS INTERRUPTUS (3-81) DAVALLIA PYXIDATA (4-82) DICKSONIA SP. (QLD) (5-80)

DRYOPTERIS AEMULA (?) ERYTHROSORA (12-81) COLDIANA (?) SPARSA (7-81) SP. (OREADES?) (6-80) HISTIOPTERIS INCISA (VARIEGATED) (4-82) HYPOLEPIS AUSTRALIS (1-81) LASTREOPSIS TINARCOENSIS (1-80) LINDSAEA LINEARIS (1-82) LORINSERIA AREOLATA (11-79) MACROTHELYPTERIS FOLYPODIOIDES (11-79) TORRESIANA (4-80) MATTEUCCIA ORIENTALIS (?) MICROSORIUM (SCOLOPENDRIA?) (4-82) MOHRIA CAFFROROM (?) OPHICGLOSSUM LUSITANICUM CORIACEUM (12-81) POLYSTICHUM SCOPULINUM ('78) SCHIZAEA BIFIDA (5-82) STENOCHLAENA PALUSTRIS (2-81) SYNCRAMMA ALISMIFOLIA (12-80) TAENITIS PINNATA (4-81) THELYPTERIS LAXA (8-77)

On our recent visit to Brisbane, we paid a visit to Mrs. D. Ricker, 355 Wardell Street, Enoggera (355 4048). Mrs. Ricker sells mostly native ferns, orchids and some cycads from her back yard garden, specializing in epiphytic ferns and orchids.

Nearly every branch and twig of every plant in her garden is decked with an assortment of stags, elks, bird's-nests and others, and we spent a very pleasant hour "prowling" around the garden.

Needless to day, we didn't come away empty handed and would recommend this as a worthwhile detour if in the area. (P.S. Mrs. Ricker also freights plants interstate if anyone is interested and can't get there in person).

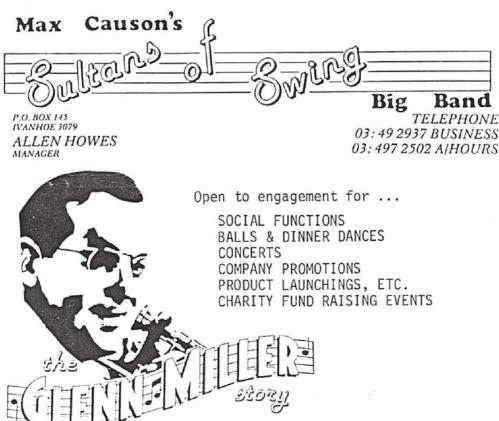
R. HILL

NEW MEMBERS

A warm welcome is extended to the following people, who joined the ranks of Fern Society of Victoria members during the past month.

Mrs. Susan Gardner Berry, 78 The Esplanade, Marribynong, Vic. 3032
Mrs. Dorothy Carter, 30 Buffalo Avenue, Corio, Vic. 3214
Mr. & Mrs. G. Damon, 2 Sandgate Avenue, 3199 Victoria
Mrs. Carole Haines, 116 Lylia Avenue, Mt. Clear (Ballarat), Vic. 3350
John & Joy Hosking, 48 Queens Parade, Burwood, Vic. 3125
N.S. McKean, 48 Eram Road, Box Hill North, Vic. 3129
Mrs. P. Sheather, R.M.B. 1045, Glenrowan, Vic. 3675
Mrs. Pamela Shields, 13 Sturp Street, Shepparton, Vic. 3630
Mr. & Mrs. Bruce Smiles, 238 West Evans Street, Newtown, Vic. 3220
Mrs. L Anderson, 421 Galston Road, Galston, N.S.W. 2159
I.M. & S.A. Crossley, 34 Fitzroy Street, Cleveland, Qld. 4163
Mr. G. Hoffman, 10 Moorehouse Road, Myrtle Bank, S.A. 5064





On lighting

Today is the shortest day, which means that the sun is rather low in the Northern sky in Victoria. It is also overcast, (I am not complaining about the rain) but it leaves my fern house rather short of light. I have no heat in my fern house so early in the Autumn I transferred several of my tropical maidenhair ferns upstairs into the sun room where we have a six foot window facing north.

It was probably a little warmer there, and they continued in about the same condition. Some weeks later I decided to turn the fluorescent light on at dusk as the days were so short, and I turned it off when we retired for the night. This produced very good results as in each plant new fronds began to appear.

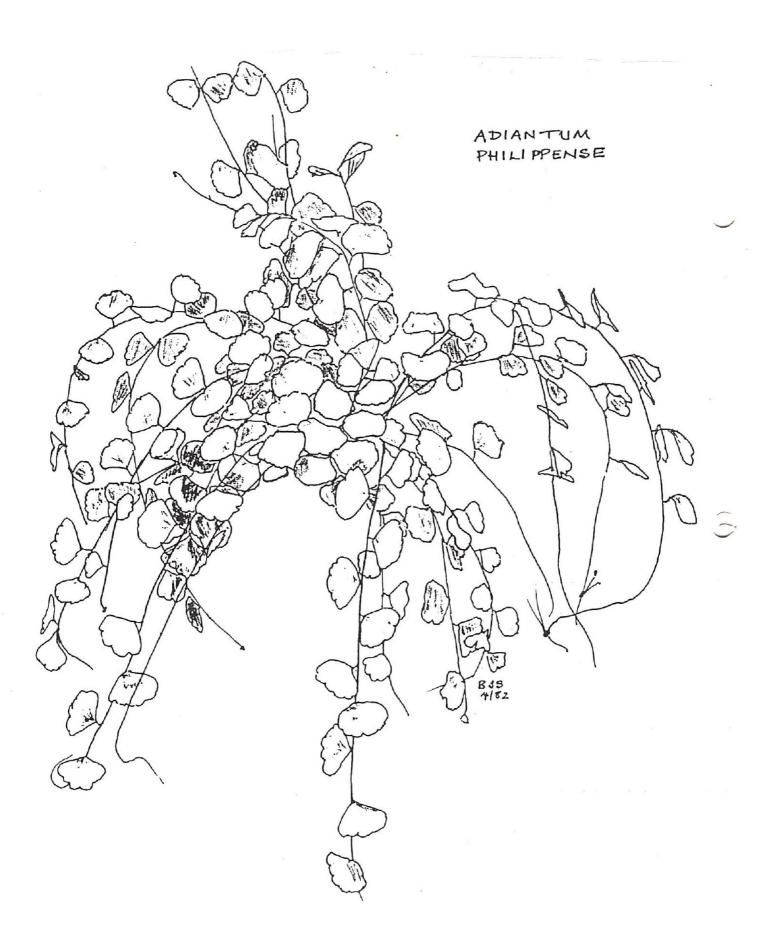
On the 11th of May, Chris Goudey and I left for North Queensland, and as we went further into the tropics the thought kept coming back "light intensity is the answer."

I noted that the sun rose about an hour earlier and set an hour later. Not only this but the sun was much higher in the sky than in Victoria, which produced a greater intensity of light. It does not end there because in Queensland the winter is their dry season which means a lot more blue skies and sunshine over the winter months. Of course, their summer being the wet season they have a lot more cloud cover, thereby protecting them from the excessive light situation.

Three years ago my wife and I were on the Atherton Tablelands and a couple of nights the temperature was down to two degrees, but the days were warm. There are a lot of beautiful ferns that grow in the area that are still hard to grow in Melbourne. I saw Platyceriums from other tropical countries that were growing outside on the trees, and they were growing very well. Some of these are hard to grow in Melbourne even in a heated glasshouse. I think possibly length of day and light intensity has something to do with the result. I was surprised to find as we returned south, one fern nursery that has installed fluorescent lights in the hot house to stimulate growth.

When I arrived home I installed a fluorescent light in my small warming house and as an experiment hung a basket of maiden hair fern below. This fern had been looked after for a number of weeks as it had dried out and only had two small fronds left. Within eight days it has produced fourteen new heads. My light is operated by a time switch and lights up at 5 p.m. and switches off at 1 a.m. I am currently excited with my experiment, and considering carrying it further.

ALBERT JENKINS



ADIANTUM PHILIPPENSE L.

by CHRIS COUDEY

The genus adiantum is represented in Australia by nine species, most of which are quite common in cultivation.

Adiantum philippense is restricted to the three northern states (N. Qld. Northern Territory and Western Australia). Outside Australia it occurs throughout the tropics of most continents. It can usually be found growing in open forest in moist rock crevices or on moist clay embankments.

A. philippense has a short creeping rhizome with pinnate fronds up to 30 cm long, often rooting at the apex to form a new plant the same as A. caudatum and A. edgeworthii. The pinnae are crescent or moonshaped as its old name (A. lunulatum) suggests. The spores are marginal and elongated, sometimes continuous, but usually more or less interrupted.

In its wild state this fern is usually deciduous unless it occurs on a continuously moist site. The fronds die down completely leaving no trace of the fern until the wet season begins.

This delicate little fern is commonly cultivated throughout the tropics and is regarded as a weed in Tropical Africa, in India it is used for making bracelets by the wild tribes people.

In Northern Queensland it has acquired the more popular name amongst fern collectors as Adiantum Tealeaves.

Adiantum philippense needs the protection of a heated glasshouse in Southern Australia, and responds well to an open mostly organic soil mix with good drainage. It does extra well in a hanging basket in a humid position in the glasshouse.

Further reading:

Australian Ferns and Fern Allies

The Fern World of Australia Handbook to the Ferns of Queensland Flora of Malaya Vol. II Ferns Ferns, Fern Allies & Conifers of Australia by H.T. Clifford and

by D.L. Jones and S.C. Clemesha 1976 and 1981.

by F.M. Bailey 1881.

by F.M. Bailey 1874.

by R.E. Holttum 1966.

J. Constantine 1980.

DRY COUNTRY FERNS

Further highlights from David Jones' talk.

To Victorians, who usually need to pamper their ferns with heating, glass-houses and the like, it came as a surprise to see some of Australia's ferns which thrive in what we would consider unbelievable conditions for fern growing.

David Jones pointed out the tremendous influence exerted by the wet & dry seasons. "Ferns that grow in the dry country in the dry season must be adaptable. Consequently there is a very limited number of ferns. Those that do grow there have drought resistant mechanisms", he said.

Most of the ferns that grow in the region produce spores and die. They thrive in full sun or rocky areas or sandy soil.

Why is it then that, usually, "southerners" are not successful in growing these ferns in cultivation? David Jones said that one of the problem why there is a high failure rate in cultivation is that people try to grow them in heavy humidiy. The ferns resent this and slowly disappear. "If you treat them the same way as a Pteris or Maidenhair fern, they don't like it," David added.

Many of the ferns growing in the dry regions are "resurrection ferns". An amazing transformation takes place. "You can walk over the ferns, crush them to powder, add some water, wait a few hours then -- Bingo! David surprised the audience with slides that show just that -- a transformation from dust to a lush plant, truly a resurrection.

Some of the dry area ferns are now endangered species. For instance, in some areas, sand which is in high demand for pipe clay is being removed and with it thousands of plants.

Dry country ferns vary in size and shape. But most have a delicacy about them which is surprising for such hardy plants. Others will resist shade -- if a tree grows up next to them, they cannot tolerate the shade and die.

The dry country is a remarkable fern growing area.

More next month

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NEW PRODUCTS REPORT

During winter composting is a very slow process. The micro organisms (bacteria) digesting the organic matter and releasing nutrients multiply slower, likewise macro organisms (worms, insects etc.) So, if we add some micro organisms, enzymes, and nutrients we must finish up with better compost faster.

Actizyme organic compost accelerator contains these and my trials show reasonable results although I have not had time to pot in it yet. At *2.95 per 100 grams I feel it is an acceptable product. I feel plenty of wood ash should be added as this contains no potash.

COMPHOST (made by phostrogen company of England) is a very good product and used sparingly, gives good results at a reasonable price of \$5.50 per 700 grams. Potash is freely available in Comphost.

COMPROT by Hortico is a mixture of Blood and Bone and ammonium sulphate which helps the bacterial process but I feel again wood ash should be added - a fair product, quite cheap at \$1.85 per 2.5 kgs.

I have a good friend who has wood fires and she saves all the wood ash for me so perhaps you may know of someone who may have some to spare also. But be sure to use only the coarse black wood ash and discard all of the grey powder ash as this may contain toxins. I also like to crush it into approximately 1 cm pieces.

I have found the A.R.C. compost bin which holds approximately 27 cubic feet the most economical and effective way of keeping my compost tidy. Retail price approximately \$29.50.

KEITH HUTCHINSON

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in	the	Fern	Society	Newsletter?

Full page	\$30.00
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Quarter page	\$10.00
Eighth of page	\$ 5.00

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SPEAKER PROGRAMME

JULY 8TH

Dr. John French - C.S.I.R.O.

"Does Forestry Management Protect

Flora Habitat"

AUGUST 12TH

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & DEMONSTRATION NIGHT

SEPTEMBER 9TH

Rod Hill

"Tree Ferns"

NOTE: In the event of a power strike on the evening of

any meeting, we regret that the meeting must be

cancelled.

VENUE OF MEETINGS:

Burnley Horticultural School Hall,

Burnley

TIME OF MEETINGS:

8 p.m.

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