

THE
FERA SOCIETY

OF
VICTORIA
inc.

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NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENTS REPORT.

It was very pleasing to see our hall almost full to hear our guest speaker Michael Garrett and I'm sure all present were well entertained. Those members lucky enough to be booked on our excursion to Tasmania in March are more eager now and are itching to board the ferry. Sincere thanks Michael.

The Upwey Garden Club Show.

Betty Allgood proved that our ladies can do us proud as she organized our fern display with the able assistance of Gay and Barry Stagoll, Bill Taylor, Clive Detman and Irene and Ted Bolster. Good to hear of Irene and Ted Bolster, both have been great workers for our society, Irene being inaugural secretary.

A letter of appreciation was received from the President of the Upwey Garden Club with an invitation for six of our members to attend their Christmas dinner dance. Well done.

Open Day.

It was rather disappointing that only thirty two members attended our open day at Albert Jenkins and Beth and Albert Wards. Their ferneries were in magnificent condition and everyone I spoke to assured me they enjoyed the day immensely. A very big thank you to Beth and both Alberts for giving their time and hospitality.

Advance notice 1987.

It is hoped to have a "bring a fern night" at our first meeting in the New Year. Each fern brought along will mean a free ticket in our big special effort so remember we would like to commence 1987 with a hall full of ferns.

Special Effort Winners.

- | | |
|----------------------|-------------------|
| 1. Beulah Powell | 5. Julian Basser |
| 2. Jean Swayn | 6. Beth Ward |
| 3. Terry Juhrmeister | 7. Elaine Crellin |
| 4. Dorothy Forte | 8. Keith Crellin |

Congratulations to all these members.

PRESIDENTIAL THANKS.

I would like to thank all those who have contributed in any way to the success of our society during 1986. In particular the ladies who have prepared supper, Maureen Verhagen for her typing, our newsletter team and all committee members for their co-operation and support. I sincerely thank you all and may everyone have a wonderful Christmas and a Happy and Healthy New Year.

Kindest Regards,

Keith Hutchinson.

DECEMBER MEETING - SUNDAY 7TH 2.00 P.M. - 4.30 P.M.
 AT RIPPONLEA, 192 HOTHAM STREET, ELSTERNWICK.
 ENTRANCE FREE PROVIDING YOU ARE A SOCIETY MEMBER.
 CURATOR, OLIVER FROST WILL GIVE A BRIEF TALK
 AND THEN GUIDE US THROUGH THE FERNERY.

As usual our Christmas meeting concludes with a party, it would be appreciated if you could bring sandwiches, savouries or cakes. Tea or Coffee will be provided.

Goods can be brought for our Christmas special effort Hampers and tickets will be sold during afternoon tea. Mavis has again baked her special Christmas Cake.

NOVEMBER SPEAKER: MICHAEL GARRETT.
FOUNDATION PRESIDENT TASMANIAN FERN SOCIETY.

To commence Michael stated that his whole life is dedicated to ferns, he works 5 days a week at Westland Nurseries in production of ferns and often to the dismay of his wife and family spends the other two out in the bush studying native ferns. At first he tried to grow most varieties in his own garden but now prefers to regard the whole of the Tasmanian bushland as his personal garden admitting this is where they look best and he can travel around photographing them and enjoying their natural beauty.

With the aid of a large map of Tasmania divided into areas Michael explained the characteristics of each, and the various ferns that grow there.

NORTH WEST AREA. Mild climate, plenty of rain. Many mountains, rivers and streams. Good range of ferns including many mainland varieties.

NORTH COAST AREA. Warm, flat coastal, mostly cleared for agriculture but many creeks and gullies have *Culcita dubia*, *Cyathea australis*, and *Doodias* growing in fairly large numbers.

NORTH EAST AREA. Mild climate, good rainfall, several mountain ranges. *Cyathea australis*, *Doodias*, and *Blechnum cartilagineum* most common here.

EAST COAST AREA. Quite dry with isolated gullies but very few ferns. Some rock ferns and *Adiantum aethiopicum* in a few locations.

MIDLAND AREA. Very flat dry and prone to frosts. Mainly agriculture and sheep grazing. Very few ferns, only rock ferns and blanket ferns.

CENTRAL HIGHLANDS AREA. Centre of state built up alpine area. Many alpine ferns including *Lycopodium* species, *Grammitis poeppigiana*, *Gleichenia alpina*, *Blechnum penna-marina*, and blanket fern.

SOUTH WEST AREA. This area has four distinctly diverse types of bushland.

1. Myrtle forests rich in ferns.
2. Broad expanses of Button Grass plains (an endemic grassy plant) with just a few ferns mainly *Lindsaea*, *Lycopodium* and *Gleichenia dicarpa*.
3. Horizontal Scrub. A tree which grows then falls, grows again and then falls until it is a very dense mass of scrub making it too wet and dark for most ferns to survive. Only finger fern, filmy fern, and *Blechnum wattsi* succeed.

Continued

4. Coastal where it is far more open there are many Dicksonia antarctica, and shore spleenworts growing profusely.

Michael believes there are many areas particularly in the central highlands and south west coast which have never been covered by botanists. During the last two or three years two new ferns have been discovered Grammitis pseudociliata, and Cyathea marcescens with the strong possibility of more in the near future.

To illustrate the beauty of the Tasmanian ferns Michael concluded his talk with a slide presentation of ferns growing in their natural habitat. The following are a few of the more unusual species.

Asplenium hookerianum. Very rare and only found in the North West corner of Tasmania in Propelia Gorge, very few other ferns will grow there because it is very dark and usually grows off rock.

Asplenium obtusatum. Shore spleenwort. Common around the coast at the high tide mark, so close to salt spray that it is continually burnt but grows in dense clumps exposed to the full sun.

Asplenium trichomanes. Maidenhair spleenwort growing at Strathgordon in full sun and will grow wherever there is limestone in Tasmania.

Asplenium terrestre just recently named and always grows on rock or in trees, common throughout the state. Similar to Asplenium bulbiferum but fronds coarser and never sets bulbils.

Ctenopteris heterophylla gypsie fern grows in almost every shaded gully in Tasmania in rock crevices or tree trunks.

Gleichenia abscida dwarf coral fern, endemic, Gleichenia grows about two feet tall in remote areas of south west has a very bright green frond and is the most distinct of all Gleichenia.

Gleichenia alpina grows in open sunny alpine areas usually covered by snow in winter, often has a bronze sheen to the fronds.

Grammitis magellanica sub species nothofageti grows at the very southern tip of the Ironbound ranges at a high altitude on stunted myrtle trees. This is the only area where they have been found outside of New Zealand.

Histiopteris incisa variegata variegated bats-wing, one plant of this has formed an extensive colony in central Tasmania but only a third of these grown from spore have the variegation.

Sticherus tener common in north east in wet gullies but common in full sun on road cuttings on west coast growing quite small and dense.

Cyathea marcescans very large and majestic but very limited number growing in Tasmania.

Chris Goudey thanked Michael for the time and effort he put into preparation, travelling here to present this excellent talk and assured him that his excellent slide presentation showed all members booked on our Tasmanian excursion next March what a feast of fern viewing they can expect. The enthusiastic round of applause confirmed this.

WANTED TO SWAP.

Beautiful new Drynaria only just discovered, for either of

1. Drynaria Rigidule diversipinnae
2. Drynaria Rigidule crestata

or other interesting Native ferns.

R. J. Patterson
P.O. Box 567, Rochedale.

1987 ANNUAL FERN SHOW.

With the end of 1986 in sight, it is time to start preliminary preparations for next years Annual Fern Show, which will be our seventh.

The 1987 show will be held on Saturday 4th April and Sunday 5th April and will again be at the Nunawading Horticultural Centre in Forest Hill, which proved such a successful venue for the 1986 show.

As usual, we need a good wide selection of well-grown healthy ferns (quality more important than size) to form the main display and in view of the many queries received this year about ferns for growing in the garden, would like to devote a section to hardy types, especially natives, suitable for this use. Please have a preliminary look at your ferns with this general plan in mind and select those to which you might give a little extra attention to have them in top condition for the show.

The other aspect of Show activities which requires some thought now is that of ferns for sale. Any members of the Society who have ferns surplus to their own needs are welcome to sell them at the Show. The only requirements are that they be healthy specimens and have been grown on by the members.

The other needs, of course, are keeping the Show weekend free and a resolution to take some part in the show activities!

Bob Lee
Chairman
Fern Show Sub-Committee.

FERN SOCIETY OF VICTORIA - STUDY GROUP:

If you want to become actively involved in learning about ferns, native and exotic, their classification and naming, and their cultivation then we hope the proposed 'Study Group' will meet these needs.

To join the study group, the only requirement is that you must be prepared to organize an activity at some stage

- either

- (1) an outing to a natural fern habitat
- or (2) a discussion meeting (in your own fernery) on a fairly small group of ferns that might be of special interest to you. (or any other variation you might like to devise!)

The organizer would need to plan the activity, provide prior notification of details for the monthly newsletter, and write up a report of the activity for a later newsletter. If this seems rather daunting, team up with a friend with similar interests and work on an activity together! I can assure any of you with doubts about your abilities in this direction, by making the effort, you will learn so much more that you will learn from anyone else and the end results will be very rewarding (and there are plenty of fellow members to help out - you are among friends!)

To get the wheels in motion, the first meeting to establish a program for 1987 will be held in Sherbrooke Forest on Saturday, 28th February, 1987. Watch for final details of time and place and further information in the February newsletter. And in the meantime, start giving thought to how you might contribute to the success of the 'Study Group'.

Rod Hill
and Ian Broughton

DECEMBER '86 SPORE LIST

<*> INDICATES SPECIES IN SHORT SUPPLY
 <N> INDICATES NATIVE AUSTRALIAN SPECIES

N	ADIANTUM AETHIOPICUM(5-84)	COMMON MAIDENHAIR
	CAUDATUM(3-85)	TRAILING MAIDENHAIR
N	FORMOSUM(7-84)	BLACK STEM
N*	HISPIDULUM(3-84)	ROUGH MAIDENHAIR
	PERUVIANUM(3-84)	SILVER DOLLAR
	POLYPHYLLUM(3-86)	
	RADDIANUM 'CRESTED MAJUS'(6-84)	
	RADDIANUM 'DELICATULUM'(3-86)	
*	RADDIANUM 'FRITZ LUTH'(6-84)	
*	RADDIANUM 'LADY GENEVA'(3-86)	
	RADDIANUM 'LADY SUPREME'(3-86)	
	RADDIANUM 'MICROPINNULUM'(3-85)	
	RADDIANUM 'PACIFIC MAID'(3-86)	
*	RADDIANUM 'TRIUMPH'(10-84)	
	RADDIANUM 'VICTORIA S ELEGANS'(4-86)	
*	RADDIANUM 'WEIGANDII'(10-84)	
*	TENERUM 'PINK SLEEPING BEAUTY'(4-84)	
N	SP.(AFF. WHITEI/S.E.QLD)(3-85)	
N	ARACHNIODES ARISTATA(3-85)	PRICKLY SHIELD-FERN
*	ARISTATA VARIEGATA(2-84)	
*	SIMPLICIOR(?)	
N	ASPLENIUM BULBIFERUM(NATIVE)(2-85)	MOTHER SPLEENWORT
N*	FLABELLIFOLIUM(3-84)	NECKLACE FERN
N	TRICHOMANES(1-86)	COMMON SPLEENWORT
*	BLECHNUM CAPENSE('86)	
N*	CARTILAGINEUM 'TROPICUM'(2-85)	GRISTLE FERN
N	CHAMBERSII(3-85)	LANCE WATER-FERN
	DISCOLOR('86)	CROWN FERN
	GIBBUM(4-84)	DWARF TREE-FERN
	GIGANTEUM(3-86)	
N	INDICUM(2-85)	SWAMP WATER-FERN
N	MINUS(3-86)	SOFT WATER-FERN
N	NUDUM 'PULCHERRIMUM'(8-85)	
N*	PATERSONII(5-84)	STRAP WATER-FERN
*	REVOLUTUM(?)	
	SPICANT(3-86)	HARD FERN
N*	VULCANICUM(4-84)	WEDGE WATER-FERN
N	WATTSII(2-85)	HARD WATER-FERN
N	WURUNURAN(9-84)	
	BOLBITIS CUSPIDATA(10-84)	
N	CHEILANTHES SIEBERI(1-86)	MULGA FERN
N	CHRISTELLA DENTATA(2-85)	BINUNG
N	PARASITICA(1-84)	
N*	COLYSIS SAYERI(2-84)	
	CONIOGRAMME JAPONICA 'VARIEGATA'(2-85)	
N	CULCITA DUBIA(4-86)	COMMON GROUND-FERN
N	CYATHEA AUSTRALIS(3-85)	ROUGH TREE-FERN
	BROWNII(2-86)	
N	COOPERI(2-86)	COIN-SPOT TREE-FERN
N	COOPERI (BLACK SCALES)(2-86)	COIN-SPOT TREE-FERN
N	COOPERI (GLAUCOUS)('86)	COIN-SPOT TREE-FERN
	DEALBATA(2-86)	SILVER TREE-FERN
N	LEICHHARDTIANA(3-85)	PRICKLY TREE-FERN
N	MARCESCENS (CUNNINGHAMII/AUSTRALIS MIX)(3-84)	
	MEDULLARIS(3-85)	BLACK TREE-FERN
	SMITHII(4-84)	SOFT TREEFERN
	SP.(NEW GUINEA)(2-86)	

N	CYCLOSORUS TRUNCATUS(3-84)	
	CYRTOMIUM FALCATUM(3-84)	HOLLY FERN
	FALCATUM X CARYOTIDEUM('86)	
N	DAVALLIA PYXIDATA(3-85)	HARE'S-FOOT FERN
N	DICKSONIA ANTARCTICA(2-85)	SOFT TREE-FERN
	FIBROSA(3-86)	WHEKI-PONGA
	LANATA('86)	
	SQUARROSA(3-86)	WHEKI
N	YOUNGIAE(S.QLD FORM)(6-85)	BRISTLY TREE-FERN
N	DIPLAZIUM AUSTRALE(3-85)	AUSTRAL LADY-FERN
N	DOODIA ASPERA(2-85)	PRICKLY RASP-FERN
N*	CAUDATA 'LAMINOSA'(1-85)	
N	MAXIMA(5-84)	
N	MEDIA(1-85)	COMMON RASP-FERN
N	DRYNARIA RIGIDULA(4-86)	BASKET FERN
	DRYOPTERIS AFFINIS 'CHRISTATA'(11-85)	
	ATRATA(3-84)	SHAGGY SHIELD-FERN
	CARTHUSIANA(2-85)	NARROW BUCKLER-FERN
	CARTHUSIANA (CRESTED)(3-86)	
	ERYTHROSORA(4-84)	AUTUMN FERN
	FILIX-MAS 'CRISTATA'(3-86)	
	FILIX-MAS 'GRANDICEPS'(3-86)	
	GYMNOSORA 'ANGUSTATA'(4-85)	
	SIEBOLDI(3-85)	
	SP.(FILIX-MAS?)(3-84)	(MALE FERN?)
	SP.(KOREAN CROWN-FERN)(3-86)	
*	SP-2(2-84)	
N	GLEICHENIA DICARPA(11-84)	POUCHED CORAL-FERN
	HUMATA GRIFFITHIANA(10-85)	
N	HYPOLEPIS PUNCTATA(3-86)	DOWNY GROUND-FERN
N	LASTREOPSIS ACUMINATA(11-85)	SHINY SHIELD-FERN
	CALANTHA(3-86)	
N*	HISPIDA(11-84)	BRISTLY SHIELD-FERN
N	MICROSORA(10-84)	CREEPING SHIELD-FERN
N	MUNITA(10-84)	
N*	LUNATHYRIUM JAPONICUM(5-84)	JAPANESE LADY-FERN
N	LYGODIUM MICROPHYLLUM(5-84)	CLIMBING MAIDENHAIR
*	MARGINARIA SUBAURICULATA(3-86)	
N	MICROLEPIA SPELUNCAE(3-86)	
	MICROSORIUM COMMUTATUM(10-84)	
N	DIVERSIFOLIUM(3-85)	KANGAROO FERN
	PARKSII(11-85)	
N	OPHIOGLOSSUM PENDULUM(3-85)	RIBBON FERN
N	PELLAEA FALCATA(3-85)	SICKLE FERN
N	FALCATA NANA(11-85)	DWARF SICKLE-FERN
	ROTUNDIFOLIA(11-84)	BUTTON FERN
*	PHYLLITIS SCOLOPENDRIUM(3-84)	HART'S-TONGUE FERN
*	SCOLOPENDRIUM 'IRREGULARE"(3-85)	HART'S-TONGUE FERN
	PITYROGRAMMA CHRYSOPHYLLA(3-86)	GOLD-DUST FERN
N	PLATYCERIUM HILLII(4-85)	
	HOLTUMII(4-84)	
	MENTELOSII(10-85)	
	RIDLEYII(11-85)	
*	POLYPODIUM ANGUSTIFOLIUM(4-84)	NARROW-LEAF STRAP FERN
	AUREUM(11-85)	GOLDEN POLYPODY
	FORMOSANUM(9-86)	GRUB FERN
	POLYSTICHUM ACROSTICHOIDES(3-85)	CHRISTMAS FERN
N	AUSTRALIENSE(3-85)	
N	FORMOSUM(1-86)	BROAD SHIELD-FERN
	LENTUM(3-85)	

	LONCHITIS(3-85)	HOLLY FERN
	MAKINOI(3-85)	
	POLYBLEPHARUM(3-85)	
V	PROLIFERUM(11-85)	MOTHER SHIELD-FERN
	RETROSO-PALEACEUM(3-86)	
	SETIFERUM 'FALCATUM DYCE'(3-86)	SOFT SHIELD-FERN
	SETIFERUM 'GRANDICEPS'(3-85)	SOFT SHIELD-FERN
	SETIFERUM 'ROTUNDATUM'(10-85)	SOFT SHIELD-FERN
*	TSUS-SIMENSE(4-84)	TSUS-SIMA HOLLY-FERN
	WHITELEGII(?)	
	SP.(ASIA)(3-85)	
	PTERIS BIAURITA(?)	
N	COMANS(2-85)	NETTED BRAKE
	CRETICA(2-85)	CRETAN BRAKE
	CRETICA 'ALBOLINEATA'(10-84)	RIBBON BRAKE
	MACILENTA(4-84)	N.Z. BRAKE
*	MULTIFIDA(2-84)	SPIDER BRAKE
N	TREMULA(3-86)	TENDER BRAKE
N	VITTATA(3-85)	CHINESE BRAKE
	WALLACHIANA(3-86)	
	QUERCIFILIX ZEILANICA(10-85)	OAK FERN
	RUMOHRA ADIANTIFORMIS(CAPE FORM)(11-85)	LEATHER FERN
N	ADIANTIFORMIS(NATIVE)(11-85)	LEATHERY SHIELD-FERN
*	SCYPHULARIA PENTAPHYLLA(4-84)	BLACK CATERPILLAR FERN
*	WOODWARDIA FIMBRIATA('86)	

Why tree ferns need their skirts

MANY tree ferns naturally retain old, dead and dying fronds which remain attached but droop to form a "skirt" around the trunk. Tree fern skirts vary with species and age of development from a mass of entire fronds reaching almost to the ground, to skeletal remains of fronds that surround only the upper part of the trunk. Until recently no one realised that these skirts have an important biological function.

After an outbreak of the greenhouse whitefly at the Edinburgh Royal Botanic Garden the skirts were removed from several mature specimens of the Australian tree fern, *Dicksonia antarctica*. This tree fern has a skirt of several dead fronds which cover the trunk for about half its height. Once the skirts had been removed, climbing plants living on the lower part of the trunk grew rapidly upwards reaching the tops of the trunks within a few months.

There the climbers formed a thickly tangled mass that severely damaged the newly emerging fronds. Prompt removal of the climbers was necessary to prevent extensive damage and there is little doubt that if this had not been done the tree ferns would have been killed.

Tree ferns differ from most trees in having their sensitive growing points confined to a small area at the apex of the trunk. Observation of tree ferns growing wild in New Zealand suggests that the function of the skirts is to prevent climbing plants from reaching the growing points. One New Zealand tree fern that lacks a skirt, *Cyathea dealbata*, succumbs frequently to damage by climbers. Those tree ferns with skirts avoid this fate because the climbers cannot colonise the trunk under the skirt (*Journal of Ecology*, vol 74, p 787). □

QUESTION AND ANSWER SECTION.

In October - Mr. Wilson asked about controlling mosquitos in a fernery.

Dansia Chapman from Ayr, Queensland writes "I've read that having the herb - 'Basil' in the fernery helps to keep mosquitos away - true or not I don't know as yet, I've not tried it".

Thankyou for this response -

Editor.

AUTHOR	TITLE	PRICE NON- MEMBERS	PRICE MEMBERS	P. & P. CODE
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S.G.A.P.	FERN STUDY GROUP BOOKLET	2.50	2.00	A
V.F.S.	AUSTRALIAN FERN JOURNAL Vol 1 No 1	2.00	1.50	A

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DRYNARIA RIGIDULA

The genus *Drynaria* consists of about twenty species, with three native to northern Australia. A distinguishing feature of this genus is the two very different types of fronds.

HABITAT: Naturally occurring from Sumatra and Malaya to Polynesia and Australia, where it is found throughout Queensland and northern N.S.W. It grows either as an epiphyte or a lithophyte on wet rocks and may grow into large clumps.

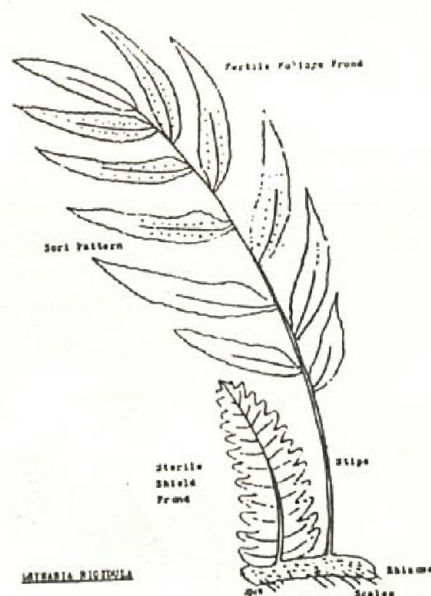
DESCRIPTION: The fleshy, creeping or ascending rhizome that is approximately 1 cm in diameter is covered with red-brown scales. Mature plants produce sterile shield fronds, that act as debris collectors, in the late autumn to early winter and within weeks these will become brown and papery. These shield fronds are much shorter than the fertile foliage fronds which are pinnate and may be 150-200 cms in length, with the stipe being approximately 1/6th of the entire length. Towards the end of winter the pinna may be shed and the stipe left bare, these may be clipped off in readiness for the flush of new growth. Sori are found in a single row on either side of the midrib.

GROWING CONDITIONS: A particularly suitable plant for basket culture. A coarse potting mix with adequate drainage is essential. The rhizome should not be completely covered by the mix as in nature they grow exposed. *Drynaria Rigidula* should be allowed to become dry to the touch between waterings as increased wetness may result in poorly developed shield fronds. Protection is necessary from frost. A soluble fertiliser suitable for ferns may be applied at $\frac{1}{2}$ the recommended strength during the two growing periods.

PROPAGATION: May be either from spore, or from rhizome division early in the spring.

AVAILABILITY: May be found in some of the larger retail stores, or at selected nurseries. It should not be too difficult to obtain a plant.

CULTIVAR: The sterile cultivar 'Whitei', is thought to have originated in Queensland, and makes a superb specimen. It is highly sought by collectors and large amounts of money are paid for small divisions.





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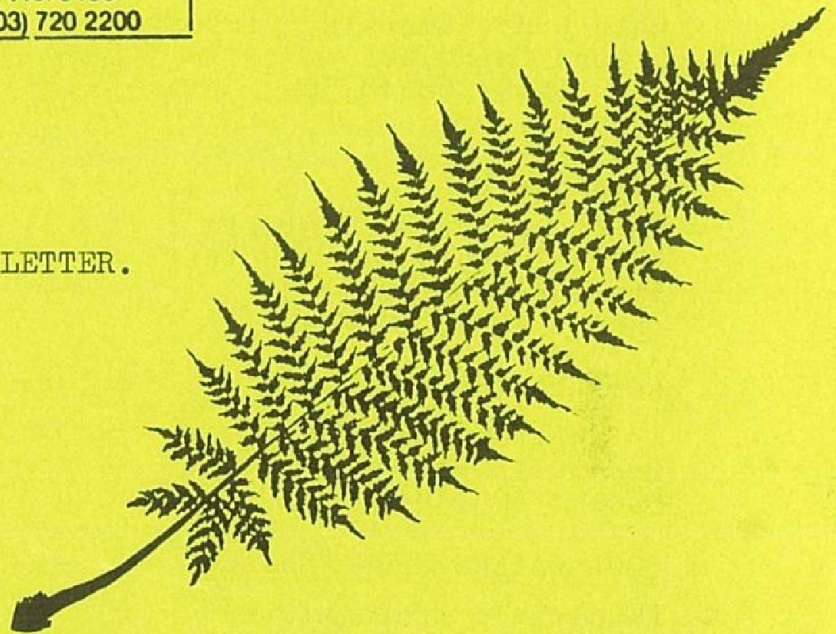
Azaleas - all you need.
Over 60 varieties, all sizes.

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ANSWER IN FEBRUARY 1987 NEWSLETTER.



BUYERS' GUIDE TO FERN NURSERIES

NEW SOUTH WALES

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6 Nelson Street
Thornleigh 2120
Phone: (02) 84 2684
By Appointment

MARLY'S FERNS

5 Seaview Street
Mt. Kuring-gai 2080
Phone: (02) 457 9168

QUEENSLAND

MORANS HIGHWAY NURSERY

Box 467, Woombye, 4559
1 km north of Big Pineapple
Turn right into Kell Road, Woombye
Wholesale & Retail
Phone: (071) 42 1613

D I A R Y D A T E S .

DECEMBER MEETING - SUNDAY 7th 2.00 p.m. - 4.30 p.m.

AT RIPPONLEA, 192 HOTHAM STREET, ELSTERNWICK.

NO MEETING IN JANUARY.

BUYERS' GUIDE TO FERN NURSERIES.

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Main Road, Emerald, Victoria
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