



**THE
FERN SOCIETY**

**OF
VICTORIA**

Inc.

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NEWSLETTER

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PRESIDENTS REPORT:

Our June Fern Forum again proved to be an excellent way to gain knowledge from our experts. John Hodges has offered to continue this service to members unable to attend meetings (see details page 5).

During general business we opened the meeting for discussion on our 1988 - 89 committee positions. It was a little disappointing that we received very few suggestions from the general membership. Although some progress was made it is important that we have the position of president and secretary nominated before our A.G.M. in August.

THE STRINGY BARK FESTIVAL will be held this year on the weekend of October 15th & 16th at The Ferntree Gully Community Centre. Bill Taylor, Joel Macher, John Oliver, Nancy & Eric Penny would appreciate some assistance in setting up and caring for a display, so please help even if only for an hour or two.

DOOR PRIZE WINNER NORMA HODGES

SPECIAL EFFORT WINNERS

- | | |
|-------------------|---------------------|
| 1. Beth Ward | 5. Roy Harrison |
| 2. June Pritchard | 6. Junnie Bland |
| 3. Renee Shields | 7. Barry White |
| 4. John Hodges | 8. Nancy Patterson. |

Phillip Hicks, for many years a member of the Burnley School Of Horticulture and Agriculture advisory service will be our Speaker on July 11th. Phillip has written extensively on his subject and will have the very latest methods of insect and fungus control so be sure to keep this night free.

Kindest regards,
Keith Hutchinson.

..Thursday July 14 ..

Welsh Presbyterian
Church Hall
320 Latrobe st
Melbourne

- PROGRAMME - 7.30 - 8 p.m. FERN SALES
- 8 p.m. MEETING COMMENCES
- 9.30 p.m. PATHOLOGY TABLE & SPECIAL EFFORT
- 9.45 p.m. SUPPER
- 10 p.m. CLOSE

Speaker - Philip Hicks Dip. Horticulture, ENTOMOLOGIST
 Subject - Pest and Fungus control.

* * * * *

Meeting Report - General Meeting, 9th June, 1988.
 The Fern Society Fern Forum.
 The panel members were: Betty Duncan, Chris Gouday, Albert Jenkins, Joel Macher and Keith Hutchinson.
 For this presentation, members were invited to seek information concerning all aspects of fern study and cultivation.

This report deals only with questions put and the answers provided. It has not been possible to include a full list of the questions submitted.

Q= Question asked. P= Panel response

Q. What is the best way to prepare leaf mould for potting mixes?

P. Autumn leaves from deciduous trees passed through a shredder and stored in a moist but not wet or soggy condition make the best leaf mould. The leaf mould should not be allowed to rot down - rotted leaf mould soon turns to mud in a mix, a condition which will soon lead to problems for the plants.

Q. How soon should fertilizer be applied to sporelings and what program should be followed?

P. Sporelings do better if fertilizer is not introduced into their mix until they have been hardened off to at least cold glass house conditions - about three or four inch pot size (75mm - 100mm). In nature sporelings have no access to or use for fertilizer.

Q. Passion vine leaf hoppers are my biggest insect problem; half strength Carbryl doesn't work on them. My ferns are kept in a bush house - could I use full strength solution?

P. Leaf hoppers are sucking insects which must be attacked by either a contact spray or a systemic poison. If half strength Carbryl doesn't work use a combined spray made up of full strength Carbryl and full strength Rogor. When applying this composite mixture make sure that you hold the spray nozzle some distance away from the fern foliage.

Q. Some of my adiantums develop a new crop of fronds only to lose after a few days - they blacken and die. I have a similar problem with asplenium whose young fronds grow to one or two inches when the eroziers brown off and die leaving only a crop of stalks.

P. Blackening of fronds can be caused by over fertilizing, over watering, insufficient light etc. The failure of asplenium frond eroziers is probably due to slugs or snails eating out the inside of the young eroziers leaving only the stalks as mentioned. A tiny snail like creature which when crushed emits a smell like garlic, could also be responsible.

Bay-gon snail pellets should dispose of snails and slugs and sick ferns can often be saved by simply transferring them into a pot of firmly packed sphagnum moss.

Q. How do I go about growing staghorn ferns (*Platycerium Superbum*) from spores?

P. The method applying to *P. Superbum* spore growing is the same as for any other genus. However, it is important that spore is sown and not husks. Sori, including spores should be scrapped from the fertile frond of the parent plant and husks separated by shaking the material through a very fine gauze seive. The use of sterilized African Violet mix, as dispensed by Bill Taylor, has proved successful as a growing medium for *P. Superbum* spores.

Q. What is a Maritime Fern?

P. Maritime ferns are those which grow from rock services close to the sea, so close in fact that at high tide these ferns are actually splashed with salt spray. *Asplenium Obtusatum* - (shore spleenwort) is a well known maritime fern. It is wrong to splash these ferns with salt water when kept in an artificial environment.

Q. What does the term - "Old World Tropics" mean?

P. All tropical lands except South America.

Q. What does pan-tropical mean?

P. Tropical areas around the world.

Q. What does the word dimorphic mean?

P. It is a word used to describe a term which produces two forms of fronds.

- Q. Is there any advantage in burning the fronds of maidenhair ferns?
- P. There is no advantage at all in burning the fronds of maidenhairs. This is an old wives technique which probably arose from observing that some maidenhairs have the ability to "rise again" after bush fires.
- Q. Do Panel Members know of anyone who is able to grow Lycopodium species from spores?
- P. Lycopodiums (Tassel Ferns) are not usually grown from spores. A more popular means of propagation is by striking cuttings.
- Q. What is the difference between indigenous and endemic ferns?
- P. An indigenous fern is one which is totally native - not introduced into this country from another country.
An endemic fern is one which occurs in one place on locality and shows no tendency to spread.

At the conclusion of this presentation, President Keith Hutchinson suitably thanked Members of the Panel for their fine contribution. Members supported Keith with their acclamation.

ONGOING FERN FORUM

Following the successful Fern Forum at our June meeting, I thought of the number of our members who cannot or do not attend our monthly meetings, but are still just as much part of our Society.

Attending meetings regularly it is obvious that we have extremely knowledgeable members, professional and hobbyists who specialise in various aspects of fern growing and are willing to share their delights and downfalls to benefit others.

To members whose only contact with the Society is the newsletter, as a committee member, I would like to offer an information service, with any questions directed to me researched, or re-directed to our experts and replied to in next available space in our newsletter, for the benefit of all.

John C. Hodges, 15 Erica Court, Blackburn North. 3130

* * * * *

PROTHALLI AND SPORELING SWAP

Terry Turney is organizing this service so if you have an abundance of one variety of fern, either prothalli or sporeling bring them along to our meeting and make a swap.

HAROLD & RITA CLNEY

Harold has only been growing ferns for 11 years, after moving from Streatham (Western District) some 12 years ago. He decided early on to specialize in Adiantums although growing many other species. He also concentrated on growing from spore using a heated propagating box. Overseas contacts were established to obtain exotic Adiantum spore.

Both Harold and Rita, in early years of the Fern Society, spent time promoting the society at different venues in the Eastern Suburbs i.e. Kalorama, Ferny Creek, Glinda and S.G.A.F. functions at Yarra Valley. Rita was also tea lady with Lynn Hill for 3½ years. Displays of Adiantums were provided at Annual Ferns Shows.

Due to declining years and volume of work involved Harold has decided to forego his unique collection of Adiantums, keeping only half dozen or so favourites with mostly inground ferns requiring less attention. Always a lover of the bush and bird life in particular, Harold and Rita now spend many days visiting mostly National Parks where, along with ferns that generally abound, a pleasant time is assured.

Harold and Rita have given us personally, great joy not only for having given us their friendship but for sharing all their beautiful Adiantums and Nephrolepis with us. Harold taught us how to grow and really love ferns.

Nance M. Logan



Harold and Rita in their
Hanging Basket House



Harold in his hot house



One of the magnificent Adiantums Harold has grown from spore.

FERN TRIP TO NORFOLK ISLAND.FERN SOCIETY MEMBERS.Mary & Garnet Frost & Dorothy Forte.

We left Albury Airport on the 15th May at 8.15 a.m. on a cool slightly cloudy day with a temperature of 10°, changed planes at Sydney and as we neared Norfolk Island the day got progressively warmer and when we landed at 1.10 p.m. Victorian time, the temperature had changed to 22°. Norfolk Island from the air was a green oasis and the Norfolk Pines stood out clearly, covered with moss hanging 12" long all over them. We collected our Hire-car and Road Map at the Airport and drove to Bumbora Apartments, where we were staying.

We made plans to check every Reserve on the Island, Anson Bay, Selwyn, Headstone, Rocky Point, Bumbora, Point Hunter, Ball Bay, Point Blackbourne, Cascade and Mt. Pitt, Mt. Bates Reserves. Many of the Reserves had no ferns in them and were picnic areas or fishing spots.

In Anson Bay Reserve we did not find any ferns. Selwyn Bay Reserve, we found DOODIA ASPERA. Headstone Reserve again we found no ferns, but at Rocky Point Reserve, we found CYATHEA BROWNII, ASPLENIUM DIMORPHUM, ASPLENIUM OBTUSATUM var. DIFFORME and at least two other varieties of Asplenium which could have been hybrids, as did not know what they were. ARACHNOIDES ARISTATA and CHRISTELLA DENTATA were everywhere. DOODIA CAUDATA and DOODIA MEDIA, PTERIS SP. COMANS and another Pteris which we found later to be PTERIS KINGIANA. We revisited Rocky Point to recheck the lovely Aspleniums and we all said, would have liked to have a large pot plant of each in our fernery.

Bumbora Reserve: we had a delightful time checking the rock pools for fish, sea creatures, coral, crabs and we also found under the rocks on the steep coast ASPLENIUM SP. TERRESTE. Ball Bay Reserve on the steep cliff face, we found PTERIS KINGIANA, ASPLENIUM SPECIES, MICROSORIUM DIVERSIFOLIUM and ADIANTUM HISPIDULUM which was really glorious with masses of brilliant pink fronds.

Cascade Reserve we visited Old Whaling Station Jetty and then wandered up a steep logging track and found ADIANTUM DIAPHANUM, PYRROSIA CONFLUENS, MICROSORIUM DIVERSIFOLIUM and ARTHROPTERIS TENELLA. Every other fern we found was in the Mt. Pitt, Mt. Bates Reserve. CYATHEA BROWNII, CYATHEA AUSTRALIS SP. NORFOKIENSIS and we had a fern lesson checking that we had the two indentified as some plants were very confusing and we had a problem gathering spore but found some at our last look almost. PSILOTUM NUDEM specimens were really superb some hanging almost 2' long and many had yellow spore capsules. We discovered two TMESIPTERIS species, one had very flat fronds 9" long and the other had spiral fronds. Later talking to the Forest Officer, they agreed there were two distinct species.

The first MARATTA SALICINA we found was only 2' high but later we found some superb specimens, the best we found as 15' high with a spread of 20' wide. In a very deep palm gully, we found three different FILMY FERNS, one which was so large, we thought could have been a heptopteris sp. one very tiny only 1" long and the other one with fronds up to 6" long.

We also found in the same gully HISTOPTERIS INCISA, LASTREOPTERIS DECOMPOSITA, LASTREOPTERIS CALANTHA, DIPLAZIUM ASSIMLE, DIPLAZIUM AUSTRALE, LUNATHYRIUM JAPONICUM.

Searching the banks above the gullies, we found two superb specimens of ASPENIUM AUSTRALASICUM, two species of PTERIS which we could not identify and the Forest Officer suggested we could have found PTERIS ZAHLBRUCKNERIANA.

We found gullies of BLECHNUM NORFOLKIANUM really superb specimens and we had to search to find fertile fronds. ASPENIUM POLYPODON as everywhere in the Reserve and the best specimen we found was 6' wide and 6' long, hanging around a treefern. NEPHROLEPIS CORDIFOLIA was prevalent on the slopes and the Forest Officer told us it did not have bulbils on the roots. We also found large clumps of ADIANTUM HISPIDULUM with no pink fronds, in fact, all the new fronds were green, so we thought there could have been two different varieties.

The only other fern we found, was a VITTARIA species.

We had a really lovely trip, the weather being really balmy and summery, the only rain was 2" Thursday night 19th May. Friday morning had a light shower but it was still very mild, so the raincoats we packed remained in our cases. I took photographs of every fern we found but in some instances I am not sure whether they will come out as the light was very confusing as it was very dark under the palms. The Norfolk Palm - Rhopalostylis baueri was beautifully in bloom and also some had big bunches of red seed. In the brush we also found a scrambling vine called Capparis nobilis but commonly called Devil's Guts and I can tell you it was a Devil, as it has recurved spines on the new growth and it really tears into the skin. I had a few blood spots on my arms and legs. The Guava trees were loaded with ripe red fruit and we soon learnt that it would quench our thirst and fill a little hunger hollow - of course the faithful thermos went to Norfolk with us.

Petrol was 71¢ per litre and we used 18 litres and we explored every road on the Island, some many times. We found food the same price as our own supermarkets, but the quality of fruit and vegetables was very poor, compared to what we are used to. Pineapples were \$2.40 Kg. Apples very poor \$8.25 Kg. Bananas \$2.05 Kg.

To sum up we thought the most prevalent ferns were ARACHNOIDES ARISTATA and ORTHOPTERIS TENELLA and the most scarce was ASPENIUM AUSTRALASIAM.

We arrived home 8 p.m. on the 20th May, 1988.

Mary Frost.

SPORE LIST

Ordering: The following spore is free to those who make donations of spore. Alternatively, members - 20 cents each, non-members - 50 cents. Available at meetings or by mail (please add \$1.00 for p. and p.). There is no charge to overseas members, but to defray postage, 3 International Reply Coupons would be appreciated.

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Adiantum raddianum cultivars		Dicksonia fibrosa	3/86
"crested majus"	3/87	Dicksonia lanata	-/86
"delicatum"	3/86	Dicksonia squarrosa	3/86
"gracillium"	3/87	Diplazium australe	3/87
"grandiceps"	3/87	Doryopteris pedata	2/87
"grossum"	3/87	Drynaria rigidula	4/86
"lady supreme"	3/86	Dryopteris affinis	
"mathewsii"	3/87	var "polydactyla"	-/87
"pacific maid"	3/86	D. carthusiana, "crested"	3/86
"victoria's elegance"	3/87	D. dilatata, "lepidota"	2/87
"weiganii"	3/87	D. felix-mas, "christata"	3/86
Aglaomorpha heraclea	6/87	D. felix-mas, "grandiceps"	3/86
Anemia phyllitidis	-/86	Dryopteris inequalis	4/87
Asplenium adiantum-nigrum	-/86	Dryopteris sp. (Korea)	3/86
Asplenium australasicum	8/86	Hypolepis rugulosa	3/87
Asplenium bulbiferum	1/87	Hypolepis punctata	3/86
Asplenium onopteris	-/86	Lastreopsis calantha	3/86
Asplenium trichomanes	1/86	Lunathryium japonicum	4/87
A. trichomanes, "incisum"	-/87	Microlepia speluncae	3/86
Asplenium viride	-/87	Microlepia strigosa	2/87
Asplenium vittaeformis	3/87	Onoclea sensibilis	-
Asplenium sp.		Paesia scaberula	7/86
(nidus? West Irian)	-/87	Pellaea rotundifolia	2/87
Athyrium felix-femina		Pellaea viridis	-/86
var. "cristata"	-/86	Phyllitis scolopendrium	-/87
Athyrium schimperii	3/87	Pityrogramma chrysophylla	3/86
Belvisia mucronata	3/86	Platycerum bifurcatum	3/87
Belvisia platyrynches	6/87	Platycerum hillii	4/86
Blechnum capense	-/86	P. willinkii, "Payton"	-
Blechnum discolor	-/86	Platycerum sp. (Timor)	-/87
Blechnum fluviatile	3/87	Polypodium formosanum	9/86
Blechnum giganteum	3/86	Polypodium vulgare	4/86
Blechnum minus	3/86	Polystichum echinatum	2/87
Blechnum spicant	3/86	Polystichum formosum	3/87
Blechnum tabulare	4/87	P. retroso-paleacum	3/86
Cibotium glaucum	8/86	Polystichum setiferum	
Cibotium schiedei	11/86	var. "falcatum Dyce"	3/86
Culcita dubia	4/86	Pteris biaurita	3/86
Cyathea brownii	2/86	Pteris cretica, "parkerii"	3/87
Cyathea cooperi	3/87	P. quadriaurita, "argyraea"	3/87
C. cooperi (black scales)	2/86	Pteris tremula	3/87
C. cooperi (glaucous form)	-/86	Pteris tricolor	3/87
Cyathea dealbata	3/87	Pteris vittata	3/87
Cyathea medullaris	3/87	var. "Cape form"	3/87
Cyathea sp. (New Guinea)	2/86	Thelypteris patens	
Cyathea sp. (Vanuatu)	6/86	var. "lepida"	3/87
Cyrtomium falcatum	3/87	Woodwardia fimbriata	-/86
C. falcatum x caryotideum	-/86	Unknown sp. (China)	-/87



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Aust.

The Membership Secretary

PO BOX 45,

HEIDELBERG WEST

VICTORIA 3084

The Financial Year of the Society shall commence on the first day of July in each year when all the subscriptions shall become due. A Member joining the Society after the September meeting shall pay a pro-rata subscription calculated at 10% of the annual subscription for each remaining month or part month of the Financial Year.

Members' services include:

- ★ Monthly newsletter posted as part of member's subscription.
- ★ A Spore Bank for members with spore posted at nominal cost.
- ★ An extensive reference library.
- ★ Stocks of books held for sale and distribution to members.
- ★ Regular field excursions.
- ★ Annual Fern Show.
- ★ Guest Speakers available for garden clubs.
- ★ Table for species identification and advice on plants in poor condition.

A large selection of ferns, grown by members, is also available for sale at each meeting.

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DIARY DATES.

VENUE - WELSH PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH HALL - 320 LATROBE ST. MELECURNE

JULY	14	OCTOBER	13
AUGUST	11	NOVEMBER	10
SEPTEMBER	8	DECEMBER	8

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

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