THE FERN SOCIETY

OF VICTORIA Inc.

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NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 10, NUMBER 11, DECEMBER, 1988

FERN SOCIETY OF VICTORIA Inc.

	Posta	Add	ress:
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P.O. Box 45, Heidelberg West, Victoria, <u>Australia</u>, 3081

OFFICE BEARERS:

President:	Robert Lee P	h.	-	836	1528
Immed. Past Pres.:	Keith Hutchinson		-	45	2997
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	Terry Turney		-	211	8169
Treasurer:	Albert Ward		-	459	4392
Secretary:	Bernadette Blacksto	ck	-	391	5517
Spore Bank Manager:	Barry White		-	337	9793
Membership Secretary:	John Oliver		-	879	1976
Editor:	Terry Turney		-	211	8169

SUBSCRIPTIONS: Single - \$13.00 (Pensioner/Student -\$9.00); Family - \$16.00 (Pensioners -\$11.00); Overseas - A\$25.00 (by Airmail).

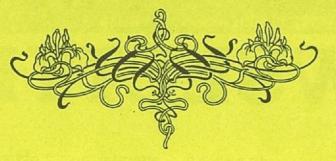
PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

With the end of this year fast approaching, a look forward to 1989 is appropriate - But first a reminder about the December Meeting/Christmas party, which will be held at Ripponlea. Details are given opposite. come and have a look at the magnificent fernery and gardens in a social atmosphere.

We plan to change venue for our monthly General meetings back to the Herbarium in the Botanic Gardens, once the hall there becomes available again. This move is scheduled for May 1989. In the interim we will stay at the Welsh Church in Latrobe Street for the Feb., March and April meetings. Some members will have seen or read that the Herbarium was officially opened on Sun., 20th November. Unfortunately, this was the opening of the Visitors' centre, which had to open this year to qualify for a Bicentenary financial grant. The extensions to the herbarium proper are still far from complete and the hall will continue as a storage area until they are. When we do return, however, it will be to a significantly enlarged hall, with the convenience of an adjoining kitchen.

Our expected return to the Herbarium next May, coincides nicely with the tenth anniversary of the official founding of the Fern Society of Victoria (3rd May, 1979). Suggestions to make this a very special occasion will be gratefully accepted.

In conclusion I would like to wish everyone a joyful Christmas, followed by a happy, healthy and successful New Year.



Bob Lee

NEXT MEETING

XMAS MEETING

Sunday, December 11th

"Ripponlea"

192 Hotham Street, Elsternwick

PROGRAMME:

- 2.00 p.m. December General Meeting
- 2.30 p.m. Tour of the Ripponlea Fernery and gardens
- 3.30 p.m. Afternoon tea Drawing of Christmas hamper



Members and families are invited to our Christmas meeting to be held on Sunday, 11th December at Ripponlea, starting at 2.00 p.m. This short meeting will be followed by a tour of Ripponlea's magnificent fernery. At about 3.30 p.m. we will have our Xmas party (as is customary, its a "bring a plate" function). Donations for the Xmas hamper would be appreciated.

There is no admission charge to Ripponlea that day for Fern Society members and families, provided you bring along some identification (e.g. your Society badge). It would be appreciated if any Society member, who is also a member of the National Trust, identify themselves as such.

Same

NOVEMBER MEETING: Slide Presentation Hosted by Keith Hutchinson

Our past president, Keith Hutchinson, commenced the evening with a few slides showing how he transformed a corner of his garden. What was previously dominated by a neighbour's ugly brick wall, built of secondhand bricks, has been turned into a delightful fernery! Although the aspect faced north-east, use of treated pine poles and joists, covered with 3"x1" slats, afforded ample protection, when aided by a creeper (Pandorea 'Snow Bells'). Elkhorns, staghorns and many hardy potted ferns grew quite well. The treated pine, painted with an oil-based mission brown paint, contrasts well with the green of the ferns. The final result is a great improvement to the whole garden.

That presentation was followed by slides from our slide bank. Cultural requirements were discussed by members with the following consensus:

Drynaria rigidula 'Whiteii' - a magnificent fern for the basket. It grows well without heat in Victoria, provided it is planted in an open mix with plenty of leaf mould. Being dormant during the winter months, it should be watered only sparingly over this period.

Phlebodium aureum 'cristatum' - another excellent basket subject, growing quite large, even in a small basket. As before, it needs an open mix with limited winter watering.

Davallia pyxidata - a good hardy fern, growing well in a pot. It creates a very graceful appearance to plant several small Davallia at an angle of 45° around the edge of a hanging basket.

Scyphularia pentaphylla - the "black caterpillar fern" with the green caterpillar (Polypodium formosanum). Both benefit from an open potting mix and some protection during cold weather.

Lycopodium phlegmaroides - the layered tassel fern is not the easiest fern to grow in southern Australia. It needs high humidity but should never be allowed to become overwet.

Didymochleana truncatula - this is a pan-tropic fern, which makes a very good pot plant. It should be well drained and dislikes overhead watering. Being pot-bound seems to aid its growth. Pests generally find it quite tasty!

Schellolepsis subauriculatum 'Knightii' - its former generic name of Gonioplebium seems to be back in fashion. It is a very striking fern for a basket. Several members reported having one in their sunroom, up to two meters across. Humata tyermanii - This hare's foot fern is slightly more difficult to cultivate than the Davallia sp., preferring to grow in or on a tree fern with good drainage. A warm protected position is needed for winter.

Platycerium veitchii - the silver elkhorn prefers to grow on rock in the wild, but has been quite successfully cultivated on soft tree fern slabs. It needs very good light to maintain its excellent silver colour and should be watered sparingly.

Psilotum nudum - The skeleton fork fern will grow well in a tree fern basket with a coarse mix. It is regarded as quite hardy in Victoria.

Cyathea rebeccae - the shiny foliage of this very slender tree fern is quite attractive, but it must be well protected from frost during winter.

Cyathea medullaris - This giant of the tree fern family is very striking with its ebony-black trunk and stipes. It is a vigorous grower but is sometimes difficult to establish in cold areas. Once seen it is seldom forgotten.

To conclude the evening, some slides from a member, Alan Bone, were screened of several superb ferns in Longwood Gardens, Philadelphia, U.S.A. Two slides from our president, Bob Lee, showed the magnificent Angiopteris evecta, with fronds approaching 20 feet in length.

Members expressed their appreciation of the night by warm acclamation.

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At the meeting one night And I'm sure other members shared my delight It took just on an hour, As slide after slide Chris did show Of ferns he had been to Bouganville to scour I wonder if our country members did know For a nominal fee They too can hear and see, All the ferns we had on show. Write to John, who will lend Being the nice fellow he is will send Just for you to see How big our slide bank can be.

NEW FORMS OF AUSTRALIAN FERNS

Botanists classify plants into groups having common characteristics. Plants are arranged systematically so that a particular Family (e.g. Blechnaceae) have groups of related genera (e.g. Blechnum, Doodia, Woodwardia). Similarly each genus is composed of species of plants with similar properties. The fundamental grouping is that of the "species", in which all the plants are basically alike. A species consists of reproducing populations of genetically related individuals. One species should be different in form from other closely related species. It should breed true, such that the vast majority of its offspring are very similar to the parent. However, Nature does not necessarily conform to the neat and simplistic classification schemes we would like to impose on it.

One of our members, Rod Pattison from Queensland, has a very keen eye for the unusual. Over the years he has found numerous examples of often common bush ferns, but with extremely unusual frond shapes or with some other remarkable differences. On the next page are silhouettes of two new such ferns he has found. The top one is an Asplenium, from in the Carnarvon Range in Qld. It is a ground fern with fronds about 45cm and a single bulbil at each apex. He has so far found two such specimens. The bottom fern is a bipinnate form of Doodia aspera from Mt. Perseverance. Although he has collected several similar sterile specimens, this one produces spore. Whether it is fertile and breeds true, is not yet known.

Such finds by Rod and other members, raises the question of how should we classify them. Are they hybrids of known species? Should they be called new species, a sub-species. (or variety) of a known species or merely a minor but unusual environmental form? Evolution is continuously at work, and many present species are in the process of splitting into two (or more) different new species. The driving force for such change is the plants' environment that is, differences in climate, soil, geography or pressures from other species.

The category "sub-species" applies when the local populations have recognizable differences, which breed true within themselves, but can still can interbreed at points of environmental overlap with other sub-species. It is worth noting that very different species in the same genus can sometimes often interbreed to produce hybrids, which are occasionally fertile. Somewhat arbitrary criteria will determine when we should start naming a sub-species as a new species instead. It depends on what distinguishing features of the plant the majority of botanists at that time believe are of fundamental importance.

The category "form" recognizes that there are often wide and sporadic variations within the genetic limits of a species. Fronds, in particular, are prone to extreme variation (i.e. "plasticity") in shape, as is well known for species of Athyrium felix-femina and in Pyrossia lingua. Forms occur randomly and do not correlate with environmental factors as do species or subspecies. They are, nonetheless, of considerable horticultural interest. Rod should be congratualted for his powers of observation.



SOCIETY NEWS:

Meetings for 1989:

As we are planning our calendar of meetings for 1989, it would be appreciated if members could offer particular suggestions for speakers, activities or excursions to Bob Lee or any of our committee.

* Society Glasses:

The new edition of our Society glasses is now available. They feature the fern, Sticherus flabellatus, and are available to members at still \$3.00 each.

* Norma's Fernery:

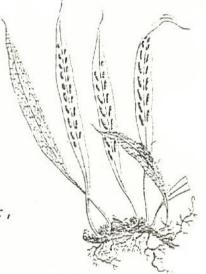
Norma's Fernery at Carboor is now closed as all fern stocks have been sold out.

* Excursion to Wilson's Promontory:

Although we have not yet received a reply regarding our excursion to "The Prom", we are hopeful of being successful in the next ballot for accommodation in May 1989. There should be some news at the December meeting.

* New Members:

Mr & Mrs R. Anulewicz, H.R. Bowie, M. Constantino, Mr & Mrs R. Grass, Mr E. Henderson, David Latter, Mr W. Long, Mrs P. Phillips, Mr G. Thompson, Karen Young and interstate members, Mrs B. Farmer, Mr E. Notley (N.S.W.), Mrs S. Watson (S.A.)



* Plants on Sale at the November Meeting.

Adiantum fragrans, A. vennstum, Asplenium flaccidum ssp haurakiense, Asplenium sp. (Chatham Is.), Blechnum filiforme, B. punctatum, Ctenitis subglandulosa, Cyathea macarthurii, Dryopteris affinis cv angustata cristata, D. wallachiana, Niphidium crassifolium, Polystichum oncolobatum, P. tsussimense, Woodwardia fimbriata plus many others.

* Additions to the Library:

The following new arrivals to the library are now available for monthly loan at each meeting:

- * Fern Society of South Australia Newsletter, No.92, Oct. 1988.
- * South Florida Fern Society Bulletin, 16(8), Oct. 1988.
- * Journal of Los Angeles Internat. Fern Soc., <u>15</u>(7), Oct. 1988.
- * S.G.A.P. Fern Study Group Newsletter, No.42, Sept. 1988.
- * Pteridologist, 1(5), 1988.
- * Gardening News, <u>8</u>(5), Oct-Nov. 1988.

* "It's a load of manure!"

Recently on the television programme, Burke's Backyard, it was suggested that a handful of fowl manure could be thrown into the centre of birds nest ferns. We have had reports of severe burning of the young croziers, so this procedure cannot be recommended. However, well-rotted fowl manure can be of benefit when placed behind elks and stags.

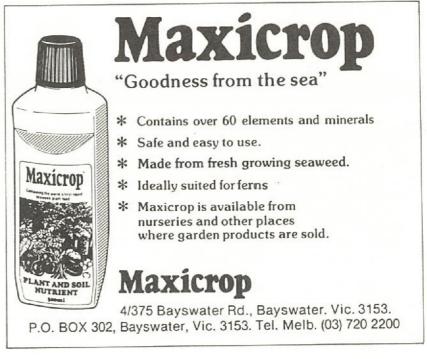
* Special Effort:

This month's special effort ferns were kindly donated by Reg Siebel and nurtured on to full health by Norma and John Hodges. Winners were:

1. Rod McConchie

- 2. Fran Harrison
- 3. Kevin Tinker
- 4. Bill Taylor
- 5. Gloria Tinker
- 6. Ray Harrison





Over the back fence once again, Spoke of a thing that come a great bane "Thrip", he says, "not me, no siree!" True, I thought, he sends them all over to me.

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J.H.

1989 FERN SHOW

After a break with no show this year, we will be aiming to make our 1989 Fern Show better than ever. The participation of as many of our members as possible is needed to achieve this. New members, in particular, are encouraged to come and join in what always proves to be a worthwhile and popular event.

The 1989 Fern Show will be held on Saturday, 8th and Sunday, 9th April at the Nunawading Horticultural Centre, 82 Jolimont Road, Forest Hill. This has been a pleasant venue for the last two shows and should prove to be so again. Setting up will be on Friday, 7th April.

We need a good selection of well-grown healthy ferns (quality is more important than size) to form the main display. The planned layout will require a good number of hanging specimens as well as pots. Please have a preliminary look at your ferns soon, select those that have promise for display and give them that little extra attention to have them in top condition by April.

Any members who have surplus ferns to sell are welcome to do so. There is no minimum quantity requirement, but it is essential that all stock be healthy and free of pests. The only other requirement is that ferns offered for sale should have been grown on by members for a reasonable period, i.e. be the results of members' own efforts and not just acquired for resale.

Further details regarding the Show will be given early the next year, but the information above will form the basis of at least one of you new year's resolutions.

> Bob Lee, Chairman, Fern Show Committee

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ENDANGERED HAWAIIAN RAIN FOREST

There is scant comfort in knowing that we are not the only country to suffer from destruction of our native forests. The only areas of tropical rain forest in the U.S. are located in Hawaii. They are by far the most isolated rain forests on earth - 4000 km from the nearest continent. However, they have a different and more alarming claim to fame; they are home to more endangered species than any other place on our planet!

Out of a total of about 172 pteridophyte species, the number of endemics amounts to 118. That is, 69% of the species are found only on those islands! The situation is even more dire for the flowering plants in the Hawaiian tropical forests with 95% endemism.

If the current attack on Hawaiian forests, by the timber industry, by developers and by uncontrolled grazing, continues unabated, it is estimated that about 50% of all of the Hawaiian ecosystems will be totally extinguished within the next 20 years.

SPORE BANK:

Ordering: The following spore is free to those who donate spore. Otherwise, members - 20 cents each, non-members - 50 cents. Available at meetings or by mail from Barry White, 24 Ruby Street, West Essendon, Victoria, 3040 (Ph: 337 9793). Please add \$1.00 for p. & p. Ther is no charge for overseas members, but to cover postage 2 International reply Cupons would be appreciated.

Adiantum caudatum	3/87
Adiantum peruvianum	6/86
A.radd. 'crested majus'	3/87
A.raddianum 'gracillimum'	3/87
A raddianum 'grandicens'	3/87
A.raddianum 'grocsum'	3/87
A.raddianum 'grandiceps' A.raddianum 'grossum' A.raddianum 'pacific maid'	3/86
Allacmorpha horaclos	6/87
Aglaomorpha heraclea	
Anaemia phyllitidis	6/86
Asplenium adiantum-nigrum	6/86
Asplenium australasicum	8/86
A. bulbiferum (native)	1/87
Asplenium sp.	107
(nidus ? - W. Irian)	/87
Asplenium trichomanes	1/86
A. trichomanes 'incisum'	6/86
Athyrium filix-femina	100
cristata'	/86
Athyrium schimperi	3/87
Belvisia mucronata	3/86
Belvisia platyrynches	6/87
Blechnum capense	/86
Blechnum discolor	8/88
Blechnum fluviatile	3/87
Blechnum giganteum	3/86
Blechnum minus	3/86
Blechnum tabulare	4/87
Cibotium glaucum	8/86
Cibotium schiedei	11/86
Culcita dubia	4/86
Cyathea brownii	2/86
Cyathea cooperi	3/87
C. cooperi (black scales)	2/86
Cyathea cooperi (glaucous) /86
Cyathea dealbata	3/87
Cyathea medullaris	3/87
Cyathea sp. (New guinea)	2/86
Cyrtomium falcatum	3/87
C. falcatum x caryotideum	/86
Cystopteris dickieana	7/86
Dicksonia antarctica	2/87
Dicksonia fibrosa	3/86
Dicksonia lanata	/86
Dicksonia squarrosa	3/86
Diplazium australe	3/87

Doryopteris pedata	2/87
Dryanaria rigidula	4/86
Dryopteris affinis	
'polydactyla'	/87
D. carthusiana (crested)	3/86
D. dilatata 'lepidota'	2/87
Dryopteris erythrosora	3/87
D. filix-mas 'cristata'	3/86
Dryopteris erythrosora D. filix-mas 'cristata' D. filix-mas 'grandiceps'	3/86
Dryopteris inequalis	4/87
Dryopteris inequalis Dryopteris sp.	
(korean crwn fern)	3/86
Hypolepis rugosula	3/87
Lastreopsis calantha	3/86
Lupathurium japonioum	
Lunathyrium japonicum	4/87
Microlepia speluncae	3/86
Microlepia strigosa	2/87
Onoclea sensibilis	6/86
Paesia scaberula	7/86
Pellaea rotundifolia	2/87
Pellaea viridis	/86
Phyllitis scolopendrium	
(small)	/87
Pityrogramma chrysophylla	3/86
Platycerium sp. (Timor)	/87
P. willinkii 'payton'	/87
Platycerium bifurcatum	3/87
Platycerium hillii	4/86
Polypodium formosanum	
Polypodium tormosanum	9/86
Polypodium vulgare	4/86
Polystichum echinatum	2/87
Polystichum formosum	3/87
P. retrosopaleaceum	3/86
Pteris biaurita	3/86
Pteris cretica 'parkerii'	3/87
P.quadriaurita 'argyraea'	3/87
Pteris tremula	3/87
Pteris tricolor	3/87
Pteris vittata	3/87
Rumohra adiantiformis	5,01
(Cape form)	3/87
Thelypteris patens	5,07
'lepida'	0/07
Unknown on (China)	8/87
Unknown sp. (China)	/87
Woodwardia fimbriata	/86



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BUYER'S GUIDE TO FERN NURSERIES:

Victoria

* Allans Flat Plant Farm - Retail. Tomkins Lane, Allans Flat, 3691, Ph:(060) 27 1375. (25Km south of Wodonga on the Yackandandah Road) Specializing in ferns and indoor plants. Open daily, except Wednesdays, and all public holidays. * Austral Ferns - Wholesale Propagators. Ph:(052) 82 3084. Specializing in supplying retail nurseries with a wide range of hardy ferns - no tubes. * Beasley's Nursery - Retail. 195 Warrandyte Road, Doncaster East, 3109. Ph:(03) 844 3355. Cool <u>Waters Fern Nursery</u> - Wholesale Fern Propagators. Beech Forest, 3237, Ph:(052) 37 3283. Specializing in cool climate native ferns. * Fern Acres Nursery - Retail. Kinglake West, 3757, Ph:(057) 86 5481. (On main road, opposite Kinglake West Primary School). Specializing in stags, elks and birdsnest ferns. * "Fern Glen" - Wholesale and Retail. Visitors welcome. Garfield North, 3814, Ph:(056) 29 2375. R. & M. Fletcher's Fern Nursery - Retail. 62 Walker Road, Seville, 3139, Ph:(059) 64 4680. (Look for sign on Warburton Highway, 300m east of Seville Shopping Centre. Closed Tues. except on public holidays). * <u>Mt Evelyn Fern Centre</u> - Retail. 63 York Road, Mt. Evelyn, 3796, Ph:(03) 736 1729. Mail orders welcome. Ridge Road Fernery - Wholesale and Retail. Weeaproinah, 3237, Ph:(052) 35 9383. Specializing in Otway native ferns. New South Wales 🛠 Jim & Beryl Geekie Fern Nursery - Retail. 6 Nelson Street, Thornleigh, 2120, Ph:(02) 484 2684. By appointment. * Marley's Ferns - Retail. 5 Seaview Street, Mt. Kuring-gai, 2080, Ph:(02) 457 9168. Queensland * Moran's Highway Nursery - Wholesale and Retail. P.O. Box 467, Woombye, 4559, Ph:(071) 42 1613. (1Km north of Big Pinapple. Turn right into Kell Road).

