# THE FERN SOCIETY

## OF VICTORIA Inc.

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NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 11, Number 7, July 1989

## FERN SOCIETY OF VICTORIA INC.

## POSTAL ADDRESS:

P.O. Box 45, Heidelberg West, Victoria, <u>Australia</u>, 3081

#### **OFFICE BEARERS:**

President:	Robert Lee	Ph	836	1528
Immed. Past Pres.:	Keith Hutchinson	- 12 Martin	45	2997
Vice-Presidents:	John Oliver		879	1976
	Terry Turney	-	211	8169
Treasurer:	Albert Ward	-	459	4392
Secretary:	Bernadette Blacks	tock -	391	5517
Spore Bank Manager:	Barry White	-	337	9793
Membership Secretary:	John Oliver	- 121	879	1976
Editor:	Terry Turney	-	211	8169
Book Sales:	Derek Griffiths	- 18.50	336	3157
8 S	usan Court, East K	eilor,	Vic.,	3033

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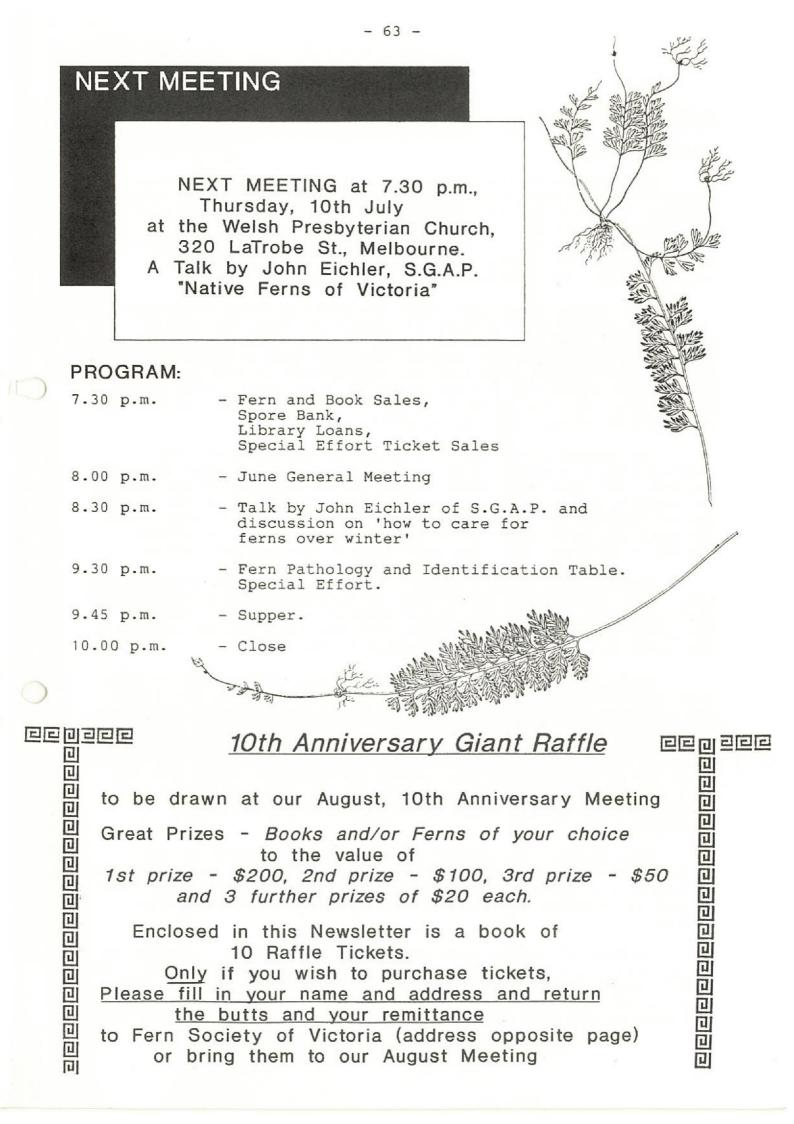
#### PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

I have had little involvement with Fern Society matters over the last month of recuperation from my nose and sinus operation (no improvement in appearance expected or achieved, I'm afraid!). However, the contents of this edition of the Newsletter show clearly that the team organizing our Society's affairs has continued to operate as usual. My thanks to John Oliver for deputizing for me.

That little preamble leads on to the team to take us into the 90's will begin operating after the Annual General Meeting in August. Please give serious consideration to whether <u>you</u> can become a member of that team and contribute to the welfare of our Society. Many of our elected Committee and others in unelected positions carry out two or more functions, so extra help will be greatly appreciated. If you would like to nominate for one of the statutory positions on the Committee, please lodge a formal application with the Secretary. If you would like to help in some other way, please speak to a member of the current Committee. **I** have mentioned before that the positions of Secretary and Vice-President will become vacant, and there may well be others. It would be nice to have an excess of nominations with a vote to follow.

Even if we don't have the excitement of an election at the A.G.M., there will be plenty of other items on the agenda for the General Meeting to follow. we hope to make this a most enjoyable evening to celebrate our 10th birthday, so do try to come along.

Best Regards,





SPEAKER REPORT - June General Meeting

#### Topic - Gadgets

The purpose of this programme was directed to problems encountered by individual members and the means by which these problems had been met and overcome. Members had been invited to bring their practical aids to the meeting and explain them to the membership at large. So good was the response, that a second topic, "Caring for Ferns over Winter" had to be postponed to next meeting. The speakers in order of appearance were:

Bill Taylor. Bill discussed the problem which occurs when cascading potted ferns become so large that they are easily damaged when left standing on a bench. He overcame this problem by use of an unlined wire basket, together with a disposable foil plate in the bottom. Standing the potted fern in the plate enables the plant to hang safely in his fern house, even above other ferns. The pie plate provides a stable surface for the pot and prevents water dripping on plants below.

Joy Horman demonstrated a piece of fencing wire bent, firstly into a U-shape, with each of the two tails bent at right angles. She said that these simple little structures are useful for hanging pots on paling fences, where the tails of the U are passed through the gaps between the palings and the fence rails. The pots are held in position by a wire hook which is passed through a drainage hole and bent over at the top and bottom.

Chris Goudey demonstrated a lever which he had designed and made. His problem was difficulty in stretching the plastic skins over his igloo frames. His lever enabled him to apply tension to the lower plastic covered batten with his foot, whilst leaving his hands free to secure the plastic to the frame.

Chris has also perfected an economical and effective homemade glasshouse paint. It consists of hydrated lime, a 4 litre can of cheap external white plastic paint and red iron oxide. He takes a 15 litre bucket and 2/3 fills it with hydrated lime (CORROSIVE!), then adds water to fill the bucket. Mix thoroughly until a heavy paste is formed, then add the paint and sufficient water until the desired consistency is obtained. The inclusion of a very small amount of red oxide is for tinting; it is also suggested that this affords extra protection from direct sunlight.

John Hodges had brought some magnificent ferns to the meeting, showing them to advantage on a tall steel frame. He also showed us how ferns grown in wire baskets can be protected from damage by covering the support wires with plastic insulating tubing.

Another of John's aids was a very neat ladder, consisting of a central 1.8 metre (6') stem, through which a series of 6 mm (1/4") pieces of dowelling had been passed to make spiral steps about 7 mm (3") apart. The bottom of the stem had been secured to the base of the pot, making the whole assembly easy to hang from

above. His pot contained a very vigorous Lygodium japonicum, growing up to the top of the pole.

A highlight of John's exhibits was a delightful method of & growing Adiantum caudatum to advantage. A small tub had been filled with potting mixture, into which a piece of 100 mm (4") black plastic tubing about 350 mm (14") long. The plastic tube had been filled with potting mix and the fern inserted therein. In his specimen the fronds had arched most attractively all the way around the piping and those fronds bearing bulbils had been stapled into the soil in the base tub. John hoped to continue this process by eventually placing the pot into yet a larger tub, so that he would have three tiers of plants cascading down.

A small container in the shape of a Wellington boot was shown with an appropriately small fern planted in it. John had aptly named this "booty-full".

Barry Stagoll explained that some of his problems with earlier attempts at building glass houses was that of proper ventilation. through experimentation, Barry has solved this problem by use of louvre windows as a means of controlling the passage of air through the structure. Adjustment of these windows is simple - the louvres can be controlled from fully open to completely closed. They are easy to install. Barry said that secondhand louvres are an economical proposition, especially as large ones may be cut down to the required size. They have no framework to worry about - just a pair of vertical assemblies, one of which activates the louvre motion, whilst the other is a slave. Glass for the louvre blades may also be cut relatively easily to fit the required opening.

Another gadget, useful in glass and shadehouse constructions, is the turnbuckle. These can be used to good effect where the structure needs to be braced against prevailing winds or to take up any slackness in walls or roof construction. A typical turnbuckle costs only \$1.50 at hardware or disposal stores; a coil of fencing wire is the only other requirement. Barry pointed out that this allows more light into the glasshouse than is possible with timber bracing. Benches and tables can also be stabilized by this method.

Barry also pointed out that use of white pigmented fibreglass is a satisfactory alternative to the regular painting of glasshouses.

Doug Thomas demonstrated his method of constructing propagating boxes, made out of polystyrene fruit boxes with small panes of glass at each end. Two pieces of glass, one for each end of the box, are first cut to size and used as templates to mark their shape on the fruit case. A 10-12mm (1/2") margin is then marked inside the glass-sized markings. The shape thus marked is then carefully cut out using a key-hole saw. With this piece removed, a centre line is marked on the edges of the opening. Use the key-hole saw to cut grooves on the three edges; clean out the grooves with a suitable tool and slide the glass panel into

place. The top edge of the box must be cut evenly to accommodate a piece of covering glass.

Before use, these boxes should be sterilized with boiling water of dilute bleach and sited in a place away from direct sun, yet affording good light. Soils and equipment used inside these boxes should also be sterilized.

The value of a Gadget Night was made clear by **David Radford** who humorously described how he had achieved the same type of propagating box by a totally different, and somewhat rough-handed technique.

The acting President, John Oliver, thanked the speakers for their varied contributions and for providing interest, information and humour. The audience heartily concurred.

written by Doug Thomas

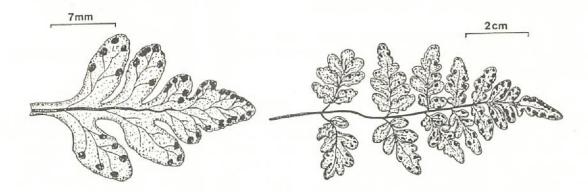
NEW FERN SPECIES FROM AUSTRALIA - Part 3

#### Cheilanthes dunlopii (D.Jones)

820

This small terrestrial fern, with bipinnatifid to bipinnate fronds up to 6" long, has been found growing in dense clumps. The individual brown sori, each located at the end of a vein and somewhat in from the pinnule margins. The fern resembles C.pumilo, which is found growing across northern Australia, but differs in frond shape, position of the sori and growth habit.

This species is very poorly known at present, being collected only once in the Keep River National Park in the Northern Territory, from a moist ledge below a waterfall in a sandstone escarpment. It was named in honour of Clyde Dunlop, a botanist with the N.T. Conservation Commission and who has contributed much to the botany of the N.T. with his tremendous knowledge of tropical plants.



Thanks are extended to David Jones for permission to reproduce details from his publication in <u>Austrobaileya</u>, <u>2</u>(5), 469-480 (1988).

## EXCURSION TO WILSON'S PROMONTORY - 18/21 May

## by Keith Hutchinson

Although weather predictions were rather doubtful, we were all in high spirits as we departed from our first pick-up point in Rosanna at 7.30 a.m. Our Sydney friends, the Bests, were welcomed at Spencer Street Station, then with our final stop at Berwick, we set out with a busload of very enthusiastic fern lovers for Coal Creek, Koorumburra, for morning tea.

After sharing refreshments, we motored on to Wilson's Promontory National Park, arriving at tidal river at one p.m. The fresh sea air must have enhanced our appetites, as we soon we soon disposed of the many sandwiches prepared by Beth Ward and after room allocation in the Baldwin Spencer Lodge, we set off along the Lilly Pilly nature walk.

The many magnificent ferns were delightfully set off by the crystal clear waters of the stream meandering along the gully. Chris Goudey suggested we return by a longer route and although it was quite a steep climb, we were rewarded by quite a superb are of gristle fern (Blechnum cartilagineum), many with bipinnate fronds in perfect condition and over 1 metre in length. Soon after our return to the Lodge, we were enjoying a hearty meal, prepared to perfection by John and Norma Hodges.

At 9 a.m. on Saturday morning, the park Ranger advised us to take the 9.5 Km hike to Sealers' Cove as most of the fern species to be found on the Prom. would be seen on this track. A sort bus trip to Mt. Oberon car park and we set forth. The first section was arid rocky terrain, with native fuchsia (Correa reflexa) and heath (Epcaris impressa) in full bloom and even a copperhead snake enjoying the sunshine. arriving at Windy Saddle (450 m altitude), we were surprised to find we had covered only 3 Km, with still over 6 Km to the cove. The next section of the track proved quite steep and rocky, but with many fern species, including a tassel fern (Lycopodium myrtifolium). The final kilometre, mainly through swampland, was one complete vista of ferns; various treeferns, Blechnum and Polystichum, all in magnificent condition. We suddenly stumbled across the cove; a picture of unspoilt beauty which remain long in our memories.

After a pleasant lunch and a short rest on the sand, we reluctantly headed back to Tidal River.

Sunday morning we departed early for Tarra Valley National Park via Yarram, enjoyed a barbecue lunch and then walked among the giant treeferns, which included Cyathea cunninghamii and C. marcescens, many over 10 metres high. Our final stop at Bulga National Park, although brief, was notable for the giant mountain ash, some many hundreds of years old. we arrived back at Spencer Street Station, just in time for ray and Marie Best to catch their train back to Sydney and, as our weekend came to a close, we all agreed it had been a very enjoyable event.



The following list of ferns, compiled by Chris Goudey, Mary and Garnet Frost, Dorothy Forte and Ella Thomas, were all identified whilst hiking at Wilson's Promontory.

Adiantum aethiopicum Asplenium bulbiferum Asplenium flabellifolium Asplenium flaccidum Athyrium australe Blechnum cartilagineum Blechnum chambersii Blechnum fluviatile Blechnum minus Blechnum nudum Blechnum pattersonii Blechnum wattsii Ctenopteris heterophylla Culcita dubia Cyathea australis Cyathea cunninghamii Cyathea marcescens Dicksonia antarctica Doodia media Gleichenia dicarpa Gleichenia microphylla Grammitis billarderi - Finger Fern Histiopteris incisa - Bat's Wing Fern Hymenophyllum australe - Austral Filmy Fern Grammitis billarderi Hymenophyllum australe Hymenophyllum cupressiforme - Common Filmy Fern Hymenophyllum flabellatum - Shiny Filmy Fern Hypolepis rugulosa Lastreopsis acuminata Lindsaea linearis Lycopodium myrtifolium Microsorium diversifolium Microsorium scandens Pellaea falcata Polystichum proliferum Pteridium esculentum Pteris Tremula Rumohra adiantiformis Sticherus tener Tmesipteris billardieri Tmesipteris parva Todea barbara

- Common Maidenhair - Mother Spleenwort - Necklace Fern - weeping Spleenwort - Austral Lady Fern - Gristle Fern - Lance Water Fern - Ray Water Fern - Soft Water Fern - Fishbone Water Fern - Strap Water Fern - Hard Water Fern - Gipsy Fern - Rainbow Fern - Rough Tree Fern - Slender Tree Fern - Skirted Tree Fern - Soft Tree Fern - Common Rasp Fern - Pouched Coral Fern - Scrambling Coral Fern - Ruddy Ground Fern - Shiny Shield Fern - Screw Fern - Long Clubmoss - Kangaroo Fern - Fragrant Fern - Sickle Fern - Mother Shield Fern - Bracken - Tender Brake - Shield Haresfoot - Silky Fan Fern - Long Fork Fern - Small Fork Fern - King Fern



#### ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is given of the tenth Annual General Meeting of the Fern Society of Victoria, which will be held on Thursday, August 10, 8.00 p.m. at the Herbarium, Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra. Business transacted will be:

1. To receive and deal with the Executive Committee's Report for the twelve months ending June 30, 1989. 2. To receive and deal with the Treasurer's Report.

3. Election of Office Bearers for 1989-1990.

4. General Business

B.Blackstock (Secretary)

## NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICE BEARERS

Nominations for Office Bearers and Executive Committee must be in the Secretary's hands in writing no less than 14 days prior to the Annual General Meeting. Nominations may be received from members at the meeting only if insufficient nominations have been received previously to fill all vacancies. Consent of all nominees must be received prior to election and nominations will be accepted only from financial members.

B.Blackstock (Secretary)

## GENERAL BUSINESS AT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will discuss and vote upon, under General Business, any matter of which 21 days written notice has been given to the Secretary. details of such business will be included in the August Newsletter, which will be posted to all members 7 days before the Annual General Meeting in accordance with the Society's Constitution.

B.Blackstock (Secretary)

#### FERN FORUM by John Hodges

The reponse to my offer, several months ago, to answer members' questions has been most promising, with several replies being sent on a personal basis. As space has been scarce in the Newsletter, replies have not been published until now.

My latest query was during Autumn, concerning use of deciduous leaves for potting mixes. Checking with several members, it seems that the most commonly accepted procedure is to let them stand in the open for 5-6 weeks, until they soften but not complretely breakdown, before putting them through a mulcher. Oak leaves are preferred by some as they remain flakey longer, thus keeping the mixture open for the maximum amount of time. They also appear to provide a lot of potash. However, other trees such as, liquid amber, pin oak and ash are excellent substitutes.

A country member with a fairly new fern house, has trouble with very pale fronds - yellowish to almost white. This may well be due to too much light and further shading is required during the brighter months ("a green that's bright means the light is right!").

If you can't get to meetings and have any queries for me to pass on, please write to John Hodges, 15 Erica Crt, Balackburn North, Victoria, 3130.

## SOCIETY NEWS:

#### 10th Anniversary Celebrations:

Don't forget our 10th Anniversary celebrations after our A.G.M. in August in the new Herbarium venue. The program will include highlights of excursions over the past ten years. Many former members have been invited - so you can re-new old friendships. Chris Goudey and Albert Jenkins will talk on the foundation and early days of the Society. There will be a champagne supper (champagne and non-alcoholic drinks will be supplied, but a plate of savouries, cakes or a dessert would be appreciated).

There will be a free commemorative gift to all present as well as a free door prize of garden products.

If you have any memorabilia of the Fern Society, such as photos of events, excursions etc, please bring them along.

#### New Members:

A warm welcome is extended to the following new members to the Society:



R. Cowan Paul Hambling David Doherty Keith Ross Nicole McDonald D.R. & M.L. Griffiths E. Bentleigh B. Whitehead

Gymea, NSW Kinglake West Packenham Kallista Ringwood Dapto, NSW

#### Excursions:

Numerous Society excursions are now being planned. If you would like to go on a local fern trip to one or more of The Otways, East Gippsland or the Cumberland Falls area, please contact Andre Cleghorn (Ph: 584 2087 or write to the Society P.O. Box). We are also planning our next long trip. Andre is keen to hear from anyone, including overseas and interstate members, with any specific suggestions. Possible venues put up so far have been Carnarvon Gorge (Central Qld), Iron Range (Cape York), Thailand and Mt. Kinabalu (Sabah).

#### 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.97, April 1989 and No. 98, May 1989.
- \* Journal of Los Angeles Internat. Fern Soc., 16(3), April 1989.
- \* Gardening News, 9(3), June July 1989.

#### Stringybark Festival:

The Society intends to put on a display at this year's Stringybark Festival at Ferntree Gully on 14 - 15 October. If you can help, by loaning ferns or giving some of your time, please contact Bill Taylor (Ph: 754 8275).



CERTIFICATION CONCERCISION

The Society wishes to thank the following members who put their time and effort into making our recent trip to Wilson's Promontory so successful: Bernadette Blackstock, John & Norma Hodges, Keith Hutchinson, John Oliver and Albert & Beth Ward.

#### Albert Jenkins - 75 years young:

Congratulations to Albert, a long-serving and valued member of our Society, on celebrating his 75th birthday.

#### Slide Bank:

Don't forget this is a service supplied by and available to all members. If you have slides which would interest other members, please let the Society copy them - your originals will be promptly returned. Full identification of any specimens shown in the slide, with time of year and locality would be of great assistance. Please contact your friendly Slide Bank Manager -John Hodges, 15 Erica Crt., Blackburn North, Victoria, 3130.

#### Gold-Plated Fern Fronds:

Chris Goudey [Ph: (052) 82 3084] has for sale some actual fern fronds which have been gold-plated. These unique gifts were brought back from his recent trip to Thailand.

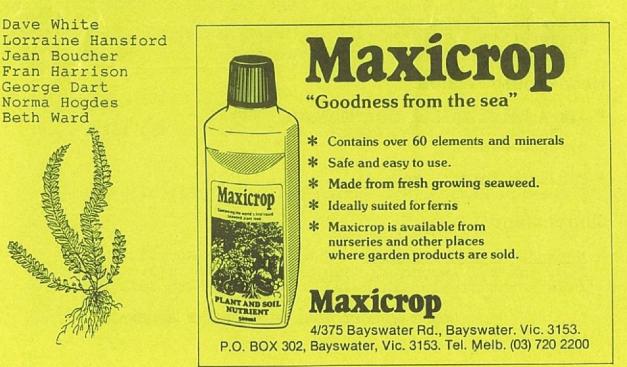
#### From the June Meeting:

Highlights of the ferns offered for sale at the June meeting were:

Asplenium computum, A. protensum, A. variens, A. bulbiferum x obtusatum, Blechnum filiforme, B. durum, Cibotium barometz, Cyathea kermacadensis, C. medullaris, C. sp. Bouganville, Dicksonia herbertii, Lygodium japonicum, Notholaena sinuata, Pellaea falcata cv 'silver dollar', Sadleria pallida.

#### Special Effort Winners:

Last month's winners were:



## BUYERS' GUIDE TO NURSERIES Victoria:

- \* <u>Allans Flat Plant Farm</u> 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.
- \* <u>Andrew's Fern Nursery</u> Retail Cosgrove Road, Invergordon, 3636, Ph:(058) 65 5369. Large range of ferns for beginners and collectors. Open daily, inculding public holidays, except Saturdays.
- \* <u>Austral Ferns</u> Wholesale Propagators. Ph:(052) 82 3084. Specializing in supplying retail nurseries with a wide range of hardy ferns - no tubes.
- \* <u>Beasley's Nursery</u> Retail. 195 Warrandyte Road, Doncaster East, 3109. Ph:(03) 844 3355.
- \* <u>Cool Waters Fern Nursery</u> Wholesale Fern Propagators. Beech Forest, 3237, Ph:(052) 37 3283. Specializing in cool climate native ferns.
- \* <u>Fern Acres Nursery</u> Retail. Kinglake West, 3757, Ph:(057) 86 5481. (On main road, opposite Kinglake West Primary School). Specializing in stags, elks and birdsnest ferns.
- \* <u>"Fern Glen"</u> Wholesale and Retail. Visitors welcome. Garfield North, 3814, Ph:(056) 29 2375.
- \* <u>R. & M. Fletcher's Fern Nursery</u> 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.
- \* <u>Ridge Road Fernery</u> 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.
- \* <u>Marley's</u> <u>Ferns</u> Retail. 5 Seaview Street, Mt. Kuring-gai, 2080, Ph:(02) 457 9168.

### Queensland:

\* <u>Moran's Highway Nursery</u> - Wholesale and Retail. P.O. Box 467, Woombye, 4559, Ph:(071) 42 1613. (1Km north of Big Pinapple. Turn right into Kell Road).