

**THE
FERN SOCIETY
OF
VICTORIA
Inc.**

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NEWSLETTER

VOLUME 16, Number 2, March 1994

FERN SOCIETY OF VICTORIA Inc.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE:

The most important news of the moment for the Fern Society is that the Fern Show will be held this year on the weekend 16 and 17 April at the Herbarium. Confirmation of the event has been delayed because of lack of a Chairman for the Show Committee. Don Fuller has volunteered to fill this role and the thanks of the Society go to Don. It is now up to the rest of the Society to get behind Don and make this Show a success. Further details on the Show are given elsewhere in the Newsletter.

The topic for the meeting this month will be a report on my trip to Papua New Guinea, a fascinating country, not only for the ferns but also for the people and their efforts to move so quickly from the stone age to the computer age. The fern competition category is the Polypodium family, which includes quite a few genera. Chapter 26 of David Jones's "Encyclopaedia of Ferns" gives a good idea of the range of genera in the family.

Chris Goudey's talk last month on fern allies was up to Chris's usual high standard and was well illustrated with photos and fern specimens. One aspect raised in question time was what distinguishes a fern ally from a fern. Again the "Encyclopaedia of Ferns" comes in handy and I quote:

"The fern allies are a polymorphic group of plants with obvious relationships to the true ferns but with important structural differences. They do not possess a distinctive frond but their leaves are small (microphylls) or linear (*Isoetes*), with a single vein and are arranged along simple or branched stems. The fern allies reproduce by spores which are produced from sporangia, however the sporangia are borne on the axils or on the apices of specialized sporophylls, not on the lower surface of leaves as in ferns. The sporophylls of fern allies may be scattered along

(continued opposite)

NEXT MEETING

DATE: Thursday, 17th March, 1994

TIME: From 7.30 p.m.

VENUE: The National Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens,
Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra.
(Melway Directory Ref. 2L A1)

TOPIC: NEW GUINEA VISIT

SPEAKER: Barry White

MEETING TIMETABLE

7.30 p.m. Pre-Meeting Activities:- Sales of Ferns, Spore, Books
and Special Effort Tickets ; Library Loans.

8.00 p.m. March General Meeting

8.20 p.m. Topic of the Evening

9.30 p.m. Fern Competition Judging
Fern Identification and Pathology
Special Effort Draw

9.45 p.m. Supper

10.00 p.m. Close.

FERN COMPETITION: The category for this month is a member of the Polypodium family. The genera in this family include *Campyloneurum*, *Colysis*, *Dictymia*, *Goniophlebium*, *Microgramma*, *Microsorium*, *Phlebodium*, *Phymatosorus*, *Polypodium*, *Pyrrosia* and many more.

The category for April will be Members' Favourite Ferns.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE: (continued)

apparently unspecialized stems or crowded into specialized cones termed strobili. Spores may be of one type (homosporous) or of two types (heterosporous), the spores being termed megaspores and microspores. In *Psilotum* and *Tmesipteris* the spores are borne in specialized structures formed by the fusion of two or more sporangia (termed syngonia)."

Our April meeting will be held just after the Fern Show and we hope we will have new members along as a result of the Show. The April meeting will be a Members Night with all members asked to bring along a favourite fern for display and comment. This topic proved most successful the last time it was held and it should also be an excellent introductory night for new members. The fern competition for the night will be an open category with all ferns eligible. I hope it will be a difficult evening for the competition judge.

Regards
Barry White

1994 FERN SHOW

Saturday, 16th April - Sunday, 17th April

After a one year break, the Fern Show is on again, being held this year at the National Herbarium, Royal Botanic Gardens (Gate F), Birdwood Avenue, South Yarra. It will be open to the public from 11.00 a.m.- 5.00 p.m. on Saturday and 10.00 a.m. - 5.00 p.m. on Sunday.

The success of the Show is most important to the continuing well-being of the Fern Society. It is, therefore, important that it is actively supported by all local members if at all possible.

Our most urgent need is publicity to make people aware of this event. This is an area where everyone can help by word of mouth and by distribution of our advertising leaflets. Two are included with this Newsletter and additional supplies will be available at the March meeting. Please try to have them displayed prominently at suitable places in your neighbourhood, such as nurseries, shops, libraries, etc. The Show Committee will be organising as much publicity as possible through the established media channels.

The display will consist of bench and floor displays of potted ferns plus a pergola for hanging baskets. It takes a large number of ferns to fill the display area and produce a spectacular effect. All members have favourite plants and we urge you to bring them in for display. We need a wide variety of healthy, attractive and interesting specimens to stimulate an enthusiasm for ferns. Plants should be well-grown and well-groomed; size is of minor importance. Please ensure that all display ferns are clearly identified with their botanical names; if you are not sure of the correct name, please try to have it identified in advance. It is also desirable to have some suitable form of identification to ensure their safe return to you.

All members are most welcome to bring ferns for sale at the Show. Those wishing to do so must advise Bernadette Thomson of their intentions, either at the March meeting or by phoning 399 1587. Only plants free from pests and disease should be offered for sale, and all must have individual labels. Also, please mark labels clearly where hot-house or other special growing conditions are required. There is no limit, either high or low, on the number of plants that can be offered for sale, but we cannot accept small tubes as the effort in handling is disproportionately high.

Please remember that people selling ferns are expected to contribute a reasonable number of plants to the display in proportion to their sales volume. Where plants of a small size are offered for sale, it would help if a specimen of each type of a reasonable size could be brought along for inclusion in the display. This will give customers a better idea of the appearance of the more mature fern.

The Show Committee is most anxious to hear very soon from members who are willing to help in the Show activities. We urgently need people to assist in setting up on Friday and clearing up after the Show late Sunday afternoon. Also required are people to assist in staffing the display and helping in the fern sales area. We particularly encourage new members, and those unable to attend our monthly meetings, to join in as the Show is an ideal opportunity to get to know other members and improve your knowledge of ferns. Do not be deterred by feeling

that your knowledge of ferns is not yet adequate; there is always plenty of help should you be asked a difficult question.

Setting up the fixtures in the display and fern sales areas will begin at 12 noon on Friday 15th. We should like to receive both display and sale ferns as early as possible in the period 2 p.m. to 8 p.m., but definitely not before 2 p.m. as we will not be organised to handle them before then.

We always need a large number of cardboard boxes suitable for packing ferns that have been sold. Please save up any suitable boxes you acquire and bring them along to the Show.

The members of the Show Committee for this year are:

Don Fuller (Chairperson)	Phone	306 5570
Betty Allgood	"	(059) 68 4858
Ian Broughton	"	(059) 64 6402
Chris & Lorraine Goudey	"	(052) 82 3084
John & Norma Hodges	"	878 9584
Bob Lee	"	836 1528
Bill Taylor	"	754 8275
Bernadette Thomson	"	399 1587
Barry White	"	337 9793

Please contact any of these for further information, and most importantly offers of help.

Don Fuller

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"A WORLD OF FERNS"

This delightful book has just been added to the Library. The book is by Josephine M. Camus and A. Clive Jermy, both of the Department of Botany, Natural History Museum, London, and Barry A. Thomas, Keeper of Botany, National Museum of Wales. The book was produced to celebrate the centenary year of the British Pteridological Society.

The book is a celebration of ferns. It is not a reference book but one to pick up and browse, and to enjoy the many first rate photos of ferns from all parts of the world.

The ferns are mostly photographed in their natural habitat and the photos demonstrate the beauty and variety of fern life. The photos include many unusual ferns, also close-up detail of their structure and aspects of their reproductive cycle.

The text of the book is written in simple terms and contains a host of interesting sidelights about ferns.

In short, it is a book which all fern lovers should enjoy.

Reviewed by Barry White

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Chris Goudey's talk to the February meeting on Fern Allies will be reported in the next Newsletter.

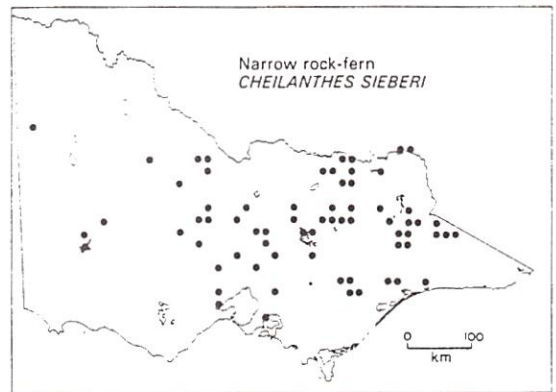
(The following article is taken, with thanks, from the March, 1990 issue of the Newsletter of the S.G.A.P. Fern Study Group. It is one of a "Ferns of the Rain Forest" series by the author originally published in the Newsletter of the SGAP Far North Coast Group in NSW.)

CHEILANTHES SIEBERI

Mulga Fern or Narrow Rock-fern

This interesting little fern is indigenous to the northern N.S.W. rain forests and is very widespread throughout the eastern part of Australia and South Australia. It extends inland to the drier areas and to Central Australia, New Zealand and New Caledonia.

(The distribution in Victoria is shown in the diagram opposite, which is taken from "Ferns and Allied Plants of Victoria, Tasmania and South Australia" by Betty Duncan and Golda Isaac. - Ed.)



The rhizome is short creeping or semi-erect, wiry with narrow pointed scales which develop a central light streak as they mature, fronds are erect and stiff emanating from near the tip of the rhizome, 4-40 cm tall and 2-5.5 cm wide. It is dimorphic and the sterile fronds are very small and not often found. Shape is tall and thin to slightly triangular. The stipe is fine with a groove in the upper surface, brown to dull red and smooth and shiny. There are a few scales near the base similar to the rhizome. The lamina is mid to dark green, glabrous, bipinnate or sometimes tripinnate. Pinnae are short and the pinnules deeply lobed with a short ultimate leaflet. Sori are sub-marginal and terminal on the veins. Although interrupted they spread laterally and tend to become confluent with age. Sori are exindusiate but the leaf margins are curved under and these margins protect the sori when young. Spores are tetrahedral and very dark to black.

In our north eastern rain forest area of N.S.W. this fern can be found in the drier parts often on the forest fringes and in the associated drier eucalypt regions. Look for it in the tops of gullies between rocks and in well-drained to dry places. It is found in drier parts far inland, rocky crevices, and areas which suffer severe dry conditions. This is a very drought resistant fern which will shrivel up and become brittle, dry and brown but on the return of rain it will absorb water, expand, green up and resume life as normal. Several features help its drought resistance. The frond area is relatively small with finely divided pinnae which also have recurved edges. Pinnae surfaces are finely stippled to slightly hairy.

Some species of *Cheilanthes* can reproduce without a sexual phase, which essentially would require moist conditions for the mobile gametes. It is not clear whether *C. sieberi* belongs to this group.

People are often unaware that this fern is growing on their land. If you have a patch of forest or rocky areas, examine carefully and you

may find an odd plant. It can readily be seen in areas like Minyon Falls in the drier parts and rocky ridges. It resents transplanting but with difficulty can be grown from spores and may survive in dry parts of the garden or rockeries.

Much argument has taken place as to whether it should be placed in the genus *Notholaena*, but its species usually have discrete sori which do not tend to become confluent with age. The derivation of the name is of some interest. *Cheilanthes* comes from the Greek, 'kheilos' - a lip and 'anthos' - a flower. This refers to the sori being protected by the reflex margin of the pinna. *Sieberi* is after Frank Wilhelm Sieber, 1789-1844, an architect and botanist born in Prague. He travelled in many countries including Australia and collected 300,000 plants, many new.

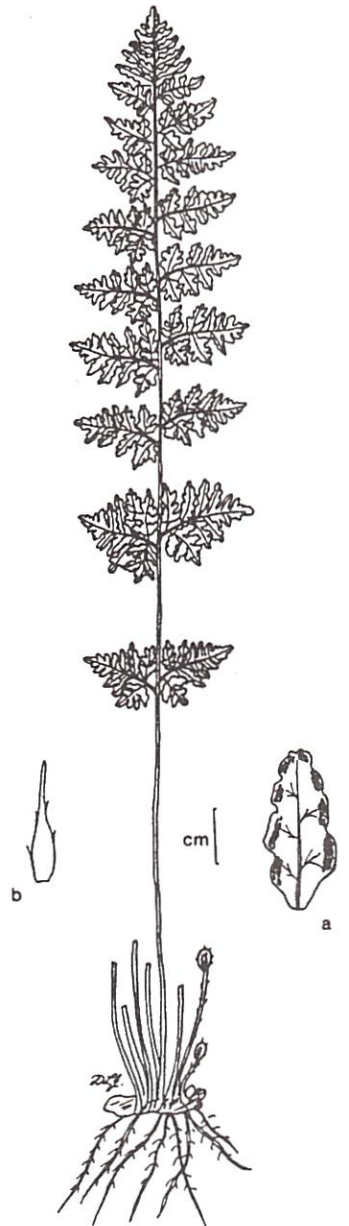
Cheilanthes sieberi has been reported many times causing poisoning in cattle, sheep, rabbits and dogs from a large area of Australia. Sheep seem particularly prone. Symptoms include shivering, staggering gait, quick respiratory rate, frothing at the mouth, incoordination of movement, muscular spasms, aimless wandering, diarrhoea, paralysis and often death. Death seems to be a common outcome if animals affected are exercised, such as droving. Post-mortem reveals pronounced congestion of the liver and cloudy swelling of the kidneys, haemorrhagic areas of the intestine, enteritis and cyanotic lungs.

Analysis shows that *Cheilanthes* contains coumarin, a chemical which interferes with blood clotting. A synthetic derivative of coumarin is used in the treatment of coronary occlusion.

Experimental feedings to animals show that the odd fern ingested causes no trouble. It would seem that over 250 grams must be eaten to cause symptoms. However, one dog died after eating the meat of affected sheep. Old dried fern appears to be more potent than a young fern. However sheep seem reluctant to eat it. Young green shoots after rain are more of a problem, probably because sheep find them more attractive. Some other species of *Cheilanthes* are also poisonous to animals.

GLOSSARY:

bipinnate - twice-divided fronds
 dimorphic - producing two forms (of fronds in this case)
 exindusiate - without an indusium
 indusium - membrane covering the sorus
 lamina - the expanded part of a leaf
 pinna - primary segment of a divided leaf
 rachis - the main axis or midrib of a frond
 sorus - a cluster of sporangia or spore-bearing cases.



CHEILANTHES SIEBERI $\times \frac{1}{2}$
 a) Pinna $\times 6$ b) Scale $\times 10$

(The diagram of *Cheilanthes sieberi* is taken from "Australian Ferns and Fern Allies" by D.L.Jones and S.C.Clemesha.)

(The introduction to this paper in the February issue omitted to acknowledge the source of the copy as the August, 1993 issue of "Fiddlehead Forum", the journal of the American Fern Society.)

NAMING FERNS OF HORTICULTURAL INTEREST

by Barbara Joe Hoshizaki

Continued from February issue:-

PLANT MONSTROSITIES

I use the term "monstrosity" with all due respect to gardeners who find this term distasteful for their garden plants. Monstrosity was defined to be a plant or specimen exhibiting an abnormal structural condition (McVaugh et al., 1968). The early Botanical Codes (1966, 1972, Article 71) rejected any name based on a monstrosity. This was to avoid complicating the botanical literature with plant names based on abnormal characters. But the difficulty of defining what constituted a monstrosity was one of the factors in its deletion from the Botanical Code. With the deletion of Article 71 and the addition of the coextensive rule, plants with abnormal differences (monstrosities) can technically be named as forms (or whatever a taxonomist chooses) rather than cultivars. The interpretation of a form accepted by most botanists is that the differences distinguishing it should be sporadic in appearance, but scattered throughout the range of the species. Some of the fern monstrosities are very rare, and could hardly be said to appear throughout the range of the species. Such an example is *Athyrium filix-femina* cv. *Victoriae*. The best rank for such plants when brought into cultivation is to consider them cultivars.

HYBRIDS

Botanists name hybrids between species of the same or different genera according to the Botanical Code. Hybrids between species of the same genus are designated by a formula, such as *Adiantum capillus-veneris* X *A. jordanii*, or by an equivalent name as *Adiantum Xtracyi* (see Fig. 1C). Hybrids between species of different genera are designated by a formula, such as *Aglaomorpha coronans* X *Drynaria rigidula*, or by a name combining part of the genus name of one parent with all or part of the other, such as *XAglaonaria robertsii* (see Fig. 2). Interspecific or intergeneric hybrids made in cultivation should be given a cultivar name in addition to the species epithet even if no other cultivar of the hybrid exists (Cultivated Code, 1980, Article 19, Recommendation 19A). For example, one variant of the hybrid *XAglaonaria robertsii* is given a cultivar name, cv. *Santa Rosa*, to distinguish it from other offspring of the same parents that might be produced. Recently a selection of cv. *Santa Rosa*, called "Sunburst" has appeared in the trade, validating the need to give hybrids a cultivar name to prevent confusion. In this case cv. *Sunburst* was not a later hybrid, but a tissue culture selection from cv. *Santa Rosa*.

Hybrids between species, particularly those of horticultural interest, may also be named under the Cultivated Code (1980, Article 18). No Latin descriptions are required in contrast with the Botanical Code. The parents may be hybrids themselves, and the hybrid epithet must be in non-Latin form and consist of no more than three words. The Cultivated Code recommends that the name include the word Hybrid(s), Cross(es), or grex (see Fig. 1D). A cross between *Pteris ensiformis* and *P. tremula* may produce hybrid offspring, all of which could be covered by the name *Pteris Ekstrand Hybrids*. In accordance with Article 19 (see above) the first cultivar may be cv. *John*. If an offspring of this same cross, even if produced years later, is worthy of recognition, it may be called cv. *Mary*. (A cross using *P. ensiformis* cv. *Victoriae* and *P. tremula* was successfully made by Mr. John Ekstrand. Although both hybrid plants have been lost, one did reach maturity, see Hoshizaki, LAIFS Fern Journal, April 1992).

Intraspecific hybrids (those made between ranks lower than a species, e.g., subspecies, variety, form, or cultivar) are seldom named by botanists. If they are given a name, a formula name is recommended even though long and cumbersome (Botanical Code, 1988, H.10B, also see H.12.1). The Cultivated Code (1980, Article 26) allows hybrid offspring of intraspecific rank parents to be given a "group" name under the group system (see discussion under Descriptive Names and Group Ranks, in the Glossary and Figure 1E). Hybrid names are often referred to as collective names because they cover all the progeny of a given cross, even if the same cross is made on separate occasions.

According to the 1988 Botanical Code, a hybrid may be indicated by the prefix "notho" as in *Polypodium vulgare* nothosubsp. *mantoniae*, which indicates the subspecies *mantoniae* is a hybrid. The use of the multiplication sign, X, also indicates a hybrid, but is omitted where collective names are used in the Cultivated Code (1980, Article 18, Recommendation 18B), for example *Lilium* (Bellingham Hybrids) cv. *Shukan* not *Lilium* (XBellingham Hybrid) cv. *Shukan*.

CULTIVARS OF UNKNOWN PARENTAGE

Occasionally fern cultivars appear that are difficult to identify as to the species from which they may have originated. This is common with roses and orchid

cultivars where there has been a long history of cultivation and hybridization. The fern cultivars which are known as to their genus but not to their species may be sterile or so altered in shape as not to be readily identifiable. Botanists have used several methods of naming such plants. A cultivar of unknown parentage may be classified under the species suspected to be the parent. For example, the *Nephrolepis* known as cv. Duffii is thought to belong to *N. cordifolia*, hence *N. cordifolia* cv. Duffii. However, some botanists have expressed doubts as to whether the cultivar belongs to this species. In earlier times garden plants unknown as to species may have been given species status, as *Adiantum bessoninae* (a garden plant that was later found to belong to *A. tenerum*, and thus became *A. tenerum* cv. Bessoninae). However, the 1953 Cultivated Code (Article C. 24) provided a solution for such plants by allowing the cultivar name to appear directly following the genus name when the exact parentage is unknown, uncertain or of complicated origin. Thus, *Nephrolepis* cv. Duffii is acceptable, see Fig. 1F. Though the 1980 Cultivated Code has omitted Article C.24, it does use such names in the text. Currently, some *Adiantum*, *Asplenium*, and *Polypodium* cultivars are unknown as to their species.

TRADEMARKS, PATENTS, AND THE PLANT VARIETY PROTECTION ACT

In the United States the granting of a trademark (trademark-name) serves to distinguish a plant from those of other growers. It prevents other growers from using confusingly similar marks or names but does not prevent them from growing the same plant (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1990). In the United States, the obtaining of a trademark is a legal matter whereas the giving of a cultivar name is a botanical matter. However, other countries do not make this distinction and require that the trademark be attached to a cultivar name, or dictate other requirements. The Cultivated Code (1980, Article 3) states: "The cultivar name must be freely available for use by any person to denote the plant whose name it is. However, when a trademark becomes a cultivar name, the cultivar name must be used in conformity with trademark laws. A cultivar name cannot, in general, be registered as a trademark." United States trademark rights last indefinitely so long as the mark is not abandoned, is properly used, and is renewed every twenty years. Certain international agreements allow applicants to file in the United States for foreign trademarks.

Trademarks are separate legal entities from patents. A patent granted on a plant excludes others from growing, using, or selling the plant for 17 years in the United States and its territories. Foreign countries have their own patent laws. Some countries may have reciprocal agreements with the United States. United States law grants a patent to anyone who has invented or discovered and asexually reproduced any distinct and new variety of plant (U.S. Depart. Comm., 1990). The applicant must establish that the plant was not found in an uncultivated state. Patents granted are identified by a patent number and a name. The name does not become a cultivar name

until it is published according to the requirements in the Cultivated Code. If the grower wishes to have added protection for his patented plant, he may also apply for trademark rights.

The Plant Variety Protection Act (Public Law 91-577) is administered by the United States Department of Agriculture and provides for a system of protection for sexually reproduced (garden) varieties (U.S. Dept. Comm., 1990). Most fern variants for which protection might be sought are asexually reproduced (divisions, tissue cultured, buds, or apogamous spores) and could be protected under a patent. Though uncommon or not investigated, a new fern variant may be developed that reproduces sexually and produces uniform, stable progeny. In this case protection may be sought under the Plant Variety Protection Act, which is part of the International Union for the Protection of New Varieties of Plants (UPOV) to which about 20 nations belong. The protection under UPOV gives the breeder the right to decide whether to reproduce and sell seed (presumably spores would be included if the life cycle is sexual) and planting material of the protected variety himself or license others to do so. The breeder is free to choose whatever name he wishes for his plant variety. The Cultivated Code may serve as a guide but is not mandatory as long as UPOV rules are followed. As with trademark names, names attached to patent numbers and Plant Variety Protection names are governmental matters and need not be in accord with the Cultivated Code, which is voluntary and governed by the botanical community. Further reading on governmental protections as they apply to the United Kingdom and Europe are covered by Byrne, Goodwin, and Mast in Styles (1986) and Schneider in Van Der Maesen (1986).

DESCRIPTIVE NAMES AND THE GROUP RANK

Some fern horticulturists lament the loss of the multi-worded descriptive names for their garden plants, as *Polystichum setiferum* var. *multilobum plumosum magnificentum*. Actually there is no loss of such names since almost all of them were formed before 1959; they may be maintained as they were originally named except changed to the cultivar status as cv. *Multilobum Plumosum Magnificum*. However, after 1959 new names must be in non-Latin form. Thus, the Cultivated Code will permit new cultivar name as cv. *Multilobed Plume* or cv. *Magnificent Plume* and even cv. *Multilobed Magnificent Plume*. The code does, however, prefer cultivar names of one or two words and it states that they must not consist of more than three words (Cultivated Code, 1980, Article 30).

One way to meet the requirements of the Cultivated Code, but still provide some description with cultivar names and to make it easier to comprehend a large assortment of cultivars, is to use a "group" name. The group rank was discussed earlier under Hybrids, in which offspring of an infraspecific cross could be given a group rank. The Cultivated Code (1980, Article 26) also allows the group rank to apply to non-hybrid off-

spring and specifies that "a group denotes an assemblage of similar cultivars and is intermediate between a species and cultivar in rank." The group name is expressed in non-Latin form. A hypothetical example would be *Polystichum setiferum* Multilobed group. When cited with a cultivar name it would be *P. setiferum* (Multilobed group) cv. Magnificent Plume. The group name is not an essential part of the full cultivar name so may be omitted in usage if desired. The Multilobed group would contain all the cultivars with tripinnate fronds and abnormally rounded divisions while the Acutely-lobed group would contain all the cultivars with tripinnate fronds and acute divisions (Druery, 1912). Since the Cultivated Code does not specify any limit to the number of words in a group name, a name using the system of Dyce (Dyce, 1987) may be *P. setiferum* (Division B, Divided Multilobed group) cv. Magnificent Plume. More information on group names is found in Dyce, Fig. 1A, 1B and Kaye, 1968.

Group ranks for cultivars of *Polypodium vulgare* would of necessity be very different from those of *Polystichum setiferum*, as would also those of *Pyrrosia linqua* which are so popular among Japanese fern hobbyists. To form workable group ranks, a thorough knowledge of the variations within the species will be required and the system devised must be flexible enough to allow the addition of new variations. A very desirable feature of a group system encourages the identification of unknown cultivars. Much more study along the lines of Dyce, Kaye and others must be done, presented, and then generally agreed upon before use of the fern group rank can be expanded.

A FERN REGISTRATION AUTHORITY

Perhaps one of the greatest horticultural needs among serious fern growers, trade people, and even fern researchers is the establishment of an International Registration Authority (IRA) for ferns. Its function is to compile, publish, and maintain a list of cultivar and hybrid names of horticultural interest. Anyone wishing to register a new cultivar or hybrid name would inform the Registration Authority which could advise on its acceptability. Thus, name duplication would be avoided and assistance in checking the correctness of the name as governed by the Cultivated Code would be accomplished. This is particularly important as several international organizations with trade interests have established regulations requiring, among other things, that names be correct and not duplicated. For more information on IRA see Leslie in Styles (1986).

Now is a favorable time to start a Fern Register for several reasons. Horticultural interest in cultivated ferns is high, and botanical interest in the taxonomy of cultivated plants is also increasing. The Cultivated Code presents few technical problems in the naming of fern cultivars. However, a readily available, simplified version of the Code with an updated glossary that can be understood by the lay reader is absolutely necessary to promote use of cultivar names and the success of a Fern Register. Unfortunately, there are fewer and fewer people who are familiar with the history and identity of many older fern variants, and their help in sorting and clarifying confused variants would be of inestimable value. Computers can now ease the labor of record keeping, and copier and fax machines could be used to make frond silhouettes for vouchers, though photographs would be better for ferns where three-dimensional frond features are important. Herbarium specimens of newly described cultivars designated as "standards" would be most desirable for ferns but curating and storing them presents problems that a fledgling Fern Register may not have the resources to handle. A single Fern Register to handle all the fern cultivars presents a staggering work load, especially in the beginning when there is a great backlog of unregistered ferns. Having different registrars for different species or genera would distribute the work load. Countries having an historical interest and live collections of particular cultivars would be ideally suited to maintain the registers. Great Britain, for instance, could be responsible for cultivars of *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Polystichum setiferum*, and others. Japan could be responsible for *Pyrrosia linqua*, *Pleopeltis thunbergiana*, and *Psilotum nudum*, and the United States responsible for *Nephrolepis exaltata* and so forth. Fern organizations located in areas where collections of certain cultivars are a specialty, such as *Platyserium* or *Adiantum*, could undertake registration of such groups. Botanists specializing in particular genera that have many cultivars, as *Pteris*, may help local registration authorities with cultivars they would hesitate to register. The whole endeavor of starting a registration authority will require much work, organization and perseverance. But work need not wait until every piece of the plan is in place; just preparing a list of present cultivars would be a significant start. If we do not act, opportunities will be lost and the continued proliferation of loosely given names and accompanying confusion will escalate, possibly to a point where the tangle will be impossible to unravel. We need a registration authority that can guide us through the maze of fern names of the past, connect them to the present, and prepare us for the future.

(to be continued)

VALE

We are sad to have to report the death last December of Don Inchley, a foundation member of our Society. Don had not attended meetings for some years as advancing cystic fibrosis limited his activities, but early members will remember him as a keen photographer who was co-founder of the Camberwell Camera Club.

FROM THE EDITOR

My review in the March, 1993 issue of the Newsletters for the preceding two years showed that there had been very few contributions from members other than our President, Barry White, and led to my appeal for help from others in filling the pages of our Newsletter.

In the issues since then Barry again provided numerous contributions, and Sarah Keel kindly supplied the full report on her talk to the November meeting. Three other members sent contributions totalling nearly two pages. My thanks to all who contributed, but the response to my request was not exactly overwhelming and I need more help from the general membership in finding copy for this Newsletter.

Practically any experience one of us has had with ferns - cultivation (successes and failures), useful gadgets, visits to fern areas, etc. - will be of interest to other members. Articles do not have to be long or polished; the information is the important part. Please have a go!

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FEBRUARY FERN COMPETITION

The category for the fern competition for the February meeting was a Fern Ally. Congratulations to the following winners:

First:	Dorothy Forte	<i>Selaginella</i> sp.
Second:	Dorothy Forte	" "
Third:	Don Fuller	<i>Lycopodium squarrosus</i>

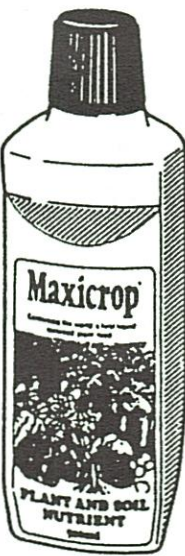
The draw for the exhibitors' prize was won by Eddie Pittaway.

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SPECIAL EFFORT WINNERSFebruary General Meeting

Don Fuller
 Fran Harrison
 Ray Harrison
 Mavis Potter
 Barry White

* * * * *



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Opinions expressed in articles in this Newsletter are the personal views of the author and are not necessarily endorsed by the Society, nor does mention of a product constitute its endorsement.

BUYERS' GUIDE TO NURSERIES

VICTORIA:

Andrew's Fern Nursery / Castle Creek Orchids - Retail.
Goulburn Valley Highway, Arcadia, 3613. (20 km south of Shepparton).
Large range of ferns and orchids for beginners and collectors.
Open daily 10 am - 5 pm except Christmas Day. Ph: (058) 26 7285.

Austral Ferns - Wholesale Propagators. Ph: (052) 82 3084.
Specialising in supplying retail nurseries with a wide range of hardy ferns; no tubes.

Coach Road Ferns - Wholesale. Monbulk. Ph: 756 6676.
Retail each Saturday and Sunday at the Upper Ferntree Gully Market
(railway station car park), Melway Ref. 74 F5. Wide selection of
native and other ferns. Fern potting mix also for sale.

Fern Acres Nursery - Retail. Kinglake West, 3757. (On main road,
opposite Kinglake West Primary School). Ph: (057) 86 5481.
Specialising in Stags, Elks and Bird's-nest Ferns.

Fern Glen - Wholesale and Retail. Visitors welcome.
D. & I. Forte, 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 Tuesday, except on public holidays.

Kawarren Fernery - Wholesale and Retail.
Situated on the Colac - Gellibrand Road, Kawarren (20 km south of
Colac). Ph: (052) 35 8444.

NEW SOUTH WALES:

Jim & Beryl Geekie Fern Nursery - Retail. By appointment.
6 Nelson Street, Thornleigh, 2120. Ph: (02) 484 2684.

Kanerley Fern Exhibition and Nursery - Wholesale and Retail.
204 Hinton Road, Nelsons Plains, via Raymond Terrace, 2324.
Ph: (049) 87 2781. Closed Thursdays and Saturdays.
Groups of more than 10 must book in advance, please.

Marley's Ferns - Wholesale.
5 Seaview Street, Mt. Kuring-Gai, 2080. Ph: (02) 457 9168.
All Fern Society members welcome. By appointment.

QUEENSLAND:

Moran's Highway Nursery - Wholesale and Retail.
Bruce Highway, Woombye (1 km north of Big Pineapple; turn right into
Keil Mountain Road). P.O. Box 47, Woombye, 4559. Ph: (074) 42 1613.