

**THE  
FERN SOCIETY  
OF  
VICTORIA**

**Inc.**

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**NEWSLETTER**

**VOL. 20, Number 6 - November / December, 1998.** Reg. No. A 0002585 E



# **FERN SOCIETY OF VICTORIA Inc.**

**POSTAL ADDRESS:** P.O. Box 45, Heidelberg West, Victoria, 3081

**OFFICE BEARERS:**

President:	Ian Broughton	Phone	(03) 5964 6402
Imm. Past President	Chris Goudey	"	5282 3084
Vice-President	George Start	"	5962 5059
Secretary	Barry White	"	9337 9793
Treasurer	Don Fuller	"	9306 5570
Membership Secretary	John Oliver	"	9879 1976
Spore Bank Manager	Barry White	"	9337 9793
Editor	Lyn Gresham	"	5796 2466
	(20 Murchison Road, Avenel, Vic., 3664)		
Book Sales	Ivan Traverso	"	9836 4658
	(19 Alta Street, Canterbury, Vic., 3126)		

**COMMITTEE MEMBERS:** Jean Boucher 9707 1592, Lyn Gresham 5796 2466, Jack Barrett 9375 3670, Peter Theophilos 9885 6431, Gaye Stagoll 9844 1558, Norma Hodges 9878 9584.

**SUBSCRIPTIONS:** Single - \$13.00 Pensioner/student \$10.00  
Family - \$15.00 Pensioner Family \$12.00  
Overseas - A\$20.00 (Magazine by airmail)

**Subscriptions fall due on 1st July each year.**

Meetings are held on the third Thursday of each month except December and January at Victoria Bowling Club, 217 Grattan Street, Carlton. Melways 2B D8.

## **OUR SOCIETY'S OBJECTIVES.**

The objectives of the Society are;

- \*to bring together persons interested in ferns and allied plants
- \*to promote the gathering and dissemination of information about ferns
- \*to stimulate public interest in ferns and
- \*to promote the conservation of ferns and their habitats.

## **FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT'S DESK**

**or Facts From a Philosophical Ferny.**

**Ian Broughton**

For many years I have resisted requests to give talks and be involved on the Fern Society Committee. How things have changed! I was honoured and pleased to be asked to consider standing as President. Things don't just happen in a society like ours, it takes a lot of work from a committed group of people and the committee members have been very effective in their work. I am delighted to have most of the previous Committee continue to serve the Society again this year and I welcome the new members who are Jack Barrett, Norma Hodges, Gaye Stagoll and Peter Theophilos (and Ian Broughton of course). I am very confident that we have a terrific committee for the year ahead.

Thanks to Chris for the work he has put into the Society again over the last three years. Without his valuable

input over the years the Society would not be what it is today and we are all grateful to Chris and Lorraine (the good woman behind the good man) for their efforts.

Elsewhere in the newsletter the Financial Report for last year is presented. It shows a deficit of a few hundred dollars for the year. While this of itself is not a great concern, it does highlight the fact that a significant number of members have not renewed their subscriptions over the last couple of years. If this group includes you, there should be a reminder slip included with the newsletter and we would appreciate and encourage your speedy renewal. There is also a need to recruit new members and to facilitate this we have included a form to give any of your friends, relations or casual acquaintances with an

*(Continued on page 84)*



# 1998 MEETINGS & EVENTS

General Meeting - Thursday 19th November 1998 at 8.00 p.m.

## **Davallias**

**Dr. Terry Turney**

**Let Terry do all the research and interpret the technical stuff for you.**

**He makes it so easy to understand.**

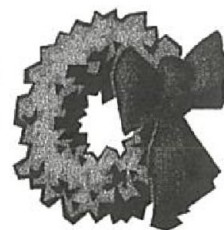
Competition: Any fern from the Davalliaceae family

(*Davallia*, *Humata*, *Scyphularia*, *Leucostegia*, *Araiostegia*, *Davallodes*, *Gymnogrammitis* and *Trogostolon*.)



## **Christmas function**

**Sunday 6th December 1998 from 11.30**  
at the Kevin Heinz Garden Centre.



For details see the separate notice.

All members and their families are cordially invited.



General Meeting - Thursday 18th February 1999 at 8.00 p.m.

## **The Ferns of New Zealand**

**Chris Goudey**

**The cheapest trip to New Zealand you'll ever take!**

*fernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsf*

### **GENERAL MEETING TIMETABLE:**

7.30	Pre-meeting activities - Sale of ferns, spore, books, merchandise and Special Effort tickets. Also library loans.
8.00	General Meeting.
8.15	Workshops and demonstrations.
9.15	Fern identification and pathology, Special Effort draw.
9.45	Supper.
10.00	Close.

*fernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsf*





(Continued from page 82)

interest in ferns. We would also encourage you to invite friends as guests to any of our meetings that may interest them.

Our Christmas Event is to be held at the Kevin Heinze Garden Centre in Doncaster on Sunday 6th December starting at 11.30 - full details elsewhere in the newsletter.

Bring your own lunch (BBQ facilities provided) and a plate of yummys to share for afternoon tea. Tea and coffee will be provided but if you want anything else to drink, bring it with you. Feel free to invite friends and family. We will have the usual draw for hampers of goodies. There will be some suitably ferny videos shown. With their potting facilities, we felt that it would also be an ideal opportunity to have a hands-on demonstration of propagating ferns by division so bring any ferns you have that are desperate for some attention and a few tools - old and good secateurs, other favourite tools and pots you may wish to use. I am intending bringing potting mix and some equipment.

As the Garden Centre is not normally made available for groups to use like this, the Committee decided that we would encourage members to bring a fern to donate to them for their Fern Gully (a very worthwhile project!). However, we want you more than your ferns so don't be embarrassed to come without a fern.

As part of our twentieth anniversary next year, we have decided to change our logo and newsletter cover. To that end, we are holding a competition for each. As well as the glory of seeing your work in print, we will give the winning entries for both the logo and a photo for the cover, two of our Society glasses.\* Entries should be received by our Secretary, Barry White, by the Christmas meeting.

Some members may be interested in buying copies of the book "Ferns of Queensland" by S.B. Andrews. It is an excellent book and an absolute must for any Ferny

travelling to Queensland. And, as Queensland has probably about 80% of all Australian ferns, it is a very worthwhile addition to any fern library. The cost will be no more than \$50 and we are hoping to do considerably better than that. Anyone who wishes to purchase a copy could order it through either me or our Book Sales Manager, Ivan Traverso.

We live in a culture and society that seem to be driving people apart and trying to make us very introspective and insular as individuals. I think it is important in groups such as ours that we don't just enjoy nature, and ferns in particular, but that we also enjoy each other's company. We can build relationships with each other by being involved in the different activities of the Society - meetings, excursions, the Fern Show and Christmas Event etc. We can also build up the Society by recruiting new members. Something I am finding lately is that we can increase our own enjoyment of the Society by being actively involved. I, to my own surprise, really enjoyed the two talks I have given in the last year and I am really appreciating this opportunity as President of the Society. Many people are needed to ensure things run smoothly, even to the work involved in setting up the hall for our meetings and returning tables and chairs afterwards. Another area everyone can be involved in is in giving your suggestions for speaker, excursions or other things we can do or services we can provide. All of the Committee look forward to everyone's active involvement in the coming year.

Our November meeting will feature Terry Turney speaking on Davallias - the competition for the night will be members of the Hare's Foot or Davalliaceae family ie. *Davallia*, *Scyphullaria*, *Humata Leucostegia*, *Ariostegia* etc.

At our February meeting Chris Goudey will speak on the ferns of New Zealand and the competition will be New Zealand ferns.

Ian

\*and \$30.00 prize money and products, donated by Rezitech.

*fernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsfernsf*

## MONTHLY COMPETITION RESULTS

### September General Meeting. Competition: A North Queensland fern.

1. *Lastreopsis tineroensis* - Ian Broughton
2. *Oenotrichia tripinnata* - Ian Broughton
3. *Adiantum cunninghamii* - That bloomin' president again!

Exhibitors' draw won by Dorothy Forte  
Special Effort - Don Fuller, Nancy Perry, Keith Rogers (yes, the South Aussie one), Dorothy Forte.

### October General Meeting. Competition: An epiphyte.

1. *Pseudodrynaria coronans* - Don Fuller
  2. *Arthropteris beckeri* - Dorothy Forte
  3. *Pyrrosia lingua* 'Monstifera' - Ian Broughton
- Exhibitors' draw won by Don Fuller.  
Special Effort - Joy Horman, John Hodges, Peter Theophilos, Jean Boucher.



# IN SEARCH OF A NEW IMAGE FOR OUR SOCIETY.

## 1. MAGAZINE COVER ILLUSTRATION.

It's time for a fresh start!

The Committee has announced that it will select a new cover feature to be used for the newsletters in 1999 and members are invited to submit their ideas.

## 2. A NEW SOCIETY LOGO.

There is also a LOGO COMPETITION running at the same time. Some people have said that they would prefer to see a native Victorian fern depicted in the Society's logo and the committee agree, so preference will be given accordingly. The chosen design is expected to be used as the official logo of the Fern Society of Victoria for a very long time.



## RULES, INSTRUCTIONS AND HINTS.

There will be a first prize awarded for each of the two sections, consisting of a pair of the Society's drinking glasses, Rezitech (Seasol) products, \$30.00 donated by Rezitech and unimaginable fame and fortune (this last not guaranteed!).

Photographs, sketches or illustrations entered should be in black and white (including grey shades if desired) or such that they reproduce well in black and white format.

They would ideally be originals, though good quality photocopied, computer scanned or other images will be quite acceptable.

Submitted designs must be your work, of course.

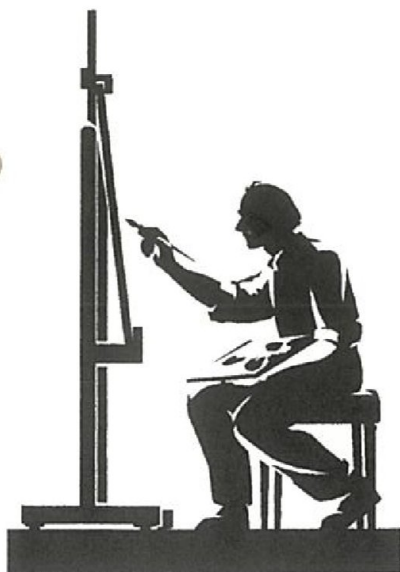
They can be any size. The cover will be almost A4 size and the logo will vary from a centimetre up to - who knows?, depending on its use.

Entries should reach the Secretary by our Christmas Get-together, Sunday 6th December. You could bring it to this month's meeting, hand it to any committee member in the grocer's or wherever you see them, post it to our P.O. box (in a tube) or bring it with you on the 6th.

Unless otherwise agreed, designs submitted will become the property of the Fern Society of Victoria Inc. to be used by the Society at the Society's discretion for archival, promotional and/or fundraising purposes.

The Society will acknowledge both the magazine cover artist and the logo designer where practicable, whenever the designs are used.

Whether you consider yourself to be a good artist or not, enter. The judges will be considering all entries equally so it is worthwhile having a go.



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



Balance Sheet as at 30th June 1998

	1997	1998
<b>MEMBERS FUNDS</b>		
\$1,997.00 As/1997 Balance Sheet		\$19,402.67
\$18,925.26 Surplus/Deficit		(\$411.33)
\$477.41		<u>\$18,991.34</u>
<b>TOTAL MEMBERS FUNDS</b>		
<b>REPRESENTED BY</b>		
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
\$209.16 Cash on hand - Book Sales		\$289.66
\$100.00 Prepaid Deposit		<u>\$100.00</u>
<b>CASH AT BANK</b>		
\$2,676.75 General Account		\$2,998.82
<b>STOCK</b>		
\$441.30 Books		\$305.00
\$150.11 Glasses		<u>\$107.52</u>
<b>INVESTMENTS</b>		
\$15,706.35 Term Deposit		15230.34
<b>FIXED ASSETS</b>		
\$96.00 Library - Less Dep'n		-
\$51.00 Plant & Equip't - Less Dep'n		-
<b>TOTAL ASSETS</b>		<u>\$19,031.34</u>
\$19,430.67		
<b>CURRENT LIABILITIES</b>		
\$28.00 Prepaid Fees		\$40.00
<b>TOTAL NET ASSETS</b>		<u>\$18,991.34</u>
\$19,402.67		

SUMMARY

\$1,997.00	1997
\$3,892.10 Income - General Account	
(\$3,786.19) Less - Expenditure	
Operating Deficit	
Add - Surplus	
\$2.00 Book Sales	
\$369.50 Fern Show	
<u>\$477.41</u>	
<b>TOTAL SURPLUS/DEFICIT</b>	

General Account

	1997	1998
<b>Income</b>		
<b>SUBSCRIPTIONS</b>		
\$1,916.90 Renewals		\$1,421.00
\$111.00 New Members		<u>\$102.00</u>
<b>SALES/COMMISSIONS</b>		
\$7.60 Spore Bank		\$7.20
\$166.05 Commissions		\$146.80
\$420.70 Misc. Sales		433.80
(\$312.98) Less - Cost of Sales (353.75)		<u>\$80.05</u>
<b>SPECIAL EFFORTS</b>		
\$242.50 General		\$177.50
(\$28.60) Less - Expenses		<u>(\$29.30)</u>
<b>OTHER INCOME</b>		
\$283.00 Advertising		\$236.00
Sundry Income		<u>\$13.00</u>
<b>ADD NON-OP'G INCOME</b>		
Bank Interest		\$86.13
\$114.83 General Account		<u>\$687.70</u>
\$971.10 Term Deposit		
<b>TOTAL INCOME</b>		<u>\$2,928.08</u>
\$3,892.10		

General Account

	1997	1998
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<b>NEWSLETTERS</b>		
\$1,219.00 Printing		\$1,363.00
\$373.96 Postage		<u>370.06</u>
<b>ADMINISTRATION</b>		
\$200.00 Honorariums		\$200.00
\$151.60 Registrations/Subscriptions		\$93.00
\$317.96 Administration/Secretarial		\$235.08
\$100.00 Entertainment		\$30.00
\$500.00 Hall hire		\$500.00
\$410.00 Guest Speaker Exp.		382.45
\$280.00 Audit fee		\$280.00
\$37.67 Bank charges		\$35.62
\$62.00 Depreciation		\$43.00
Additional Depreciation - Library - Plant		\$74.00
Sundries		\$30.00
\$134.00 Insurance		\$59.90
<b>TOTAL EXPENDITURE</b>		<u>\$2,098.05</u>
\$3,786.19		



Fern Show

1997

INCOME

\$728.00 Door Receipts  
\$4,049.00 Fern Sales  
(\$3,495.10) Less - cost of sales  
\$50.00 Donation

EXPENDITURE

\$110.00 Insurance  
\$72.00 Parking Permit  
\$140.25 Administration Expenses  
\$540.00 Hire of Venue  
\$50.00 Travel  
\$50.25 Awards/Presentations  
Less Expense Recovery from A.R.S.

\$369.50 FERN SOCIETY SURPLUS

Add - 50% Joint Profit

\$369.50 SURPLUS

BOOK SALES

1997

INCOME

\$296.00 Sales  
(\$304.00) Less- Cost of Sales  
Postage Recovery

EXPENDITURE

Postage

\$2.00 SURPLUS

1998

\$3,840.40  
(\$3,204.93)

\$635.47  
\$50.00

\$685.47  
\$685.47

\$110.00

\$57.57

\$100.00

\$50.00

\$66.40

\$383.97  
\$129.00

\$254.97

\$430.50

\$26.20

\$456.70

1998

\$160.00  
(\$125.00)

\$35.00  
\$20.00  
\$55.00

\$20.00

\$35.00


The President  
Fern Society of Victoria Inc.

AUDITORS REPORT

I have examined the books of account and associated records of the Fern Society of Victoria Inc. for the year ended 30th June 1998 and have been provided with all the information and explanations required.

I consider the Statements of Receipts and Payments and Balance Sheet reflect a true and proper view of the financial operations of the Society for the year ended 30th June 1998

I wish to thank the officers of the Society for their co-operation and assistance

  
R.T. Angwin FCPA

R.T. Angwin  
6 Tenterden Street  
Spotswood 3015

10 September 1998





## FERN TRIP TO GIPPSLAND

### SEPTEMBER 26-27 1998.

### REPORT BY MARY FROST.

4.20a.m. the alarm rang. Garnet and I to our feet and into action, on our way by 5a.m., arriving at Fern Glen 9a.m., time for a cup of coffee and then out to the Princes Highway to meet the bus.

The weather was superb, in fact a little hot to be tramping in the forest. Arrived at **Den of Nargun** after lunch on the way. The forest was very very dry and the ferns were only just starting to recover.

#### Ferns found:-

Adiantum aethiopicum	Asplenium flabellifolium
Cheilanthes austrotenuifolia	Cheilanthes sieberi
Dicksonia antarctica	Doodia media
Hypolepis glandulifera	Lastreopsis acuminata
Pellaea falcata	Polystichum proliferum
Pteridium esculentum	Pteris tremula
Pyrrosia rupestris	
Hymenophyllum cupressiforme (found of course by Dorothy) and last but not least:- Microsorium scandens or was it M. diversifolium, or both? Is it decided yet?	

For the other plant lovers the following orchids were found:-

Pterostylis curta  
Pterostylis nana - dwarf greenhood  
Pterostylis nutans - nodding greenhood  
Caladenia carnea  
Caladenia carnea var. fuscata

Overnight at **Bairnsdale** and everyone who had gas off of course had a long *hot* shower! Dinner was superb and enjoyed by all.

Next morning after an 8.30a.m. breakfast, we were on our way to **Fairy Dell**. Again the forest was very dry. The Mitchell river had risen 7ft.

#### Ferns found:-

Adiantum aethiopicum	Asplenium bulbiferum
Asplenium flabellifolium	Blechnum cartilagineum
Blechnum nudum	Blechnum patersonii
Calochlæna dubia	Cyathea australis
Cyathea leichhardtiana	Dennstaedtia davallioides
Dicksonia antarctica	Diplazium australe
Doodia media	Histiopteris incisa
Lastreopsis acuminata	Pellaea falcata
Polystichum proliferum	Pteridium esculentum
Pteris umbrosa	Pyrrosia rupestris
Todea barbara	Pteris tremula
Hypolepis muelleri	Hymenophyllum cupressiforme
Polyphlebium venosum	

#### Other plants included:-

Indigofera adesnufolia  
Olearia - Victorian flat daisy bush  
Orchids:- Caladenia carnea - pink fingers  
Chiloglottis gunnii - bird orchid

Glossodia minor - small wax lip only found in this part of the state!!!

Glossodia major - large wax lip orchid which is found all over Australia.

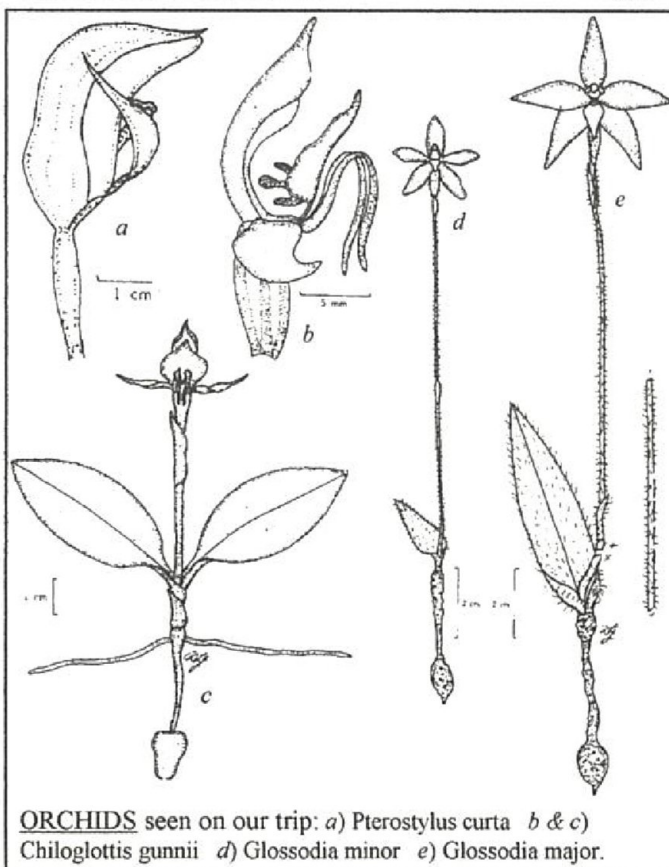
After leaving Fairy Dell our driver Barry took LOST ROAD and after going down through gullies, over creeks, up steep ridges he finally found RETURN ROAD and on the way back through a steep crossing BANG !! We lost the spare tyre, soon fixed and on our way again. Garnet, who is a beekeeper by trade and is always looking at the trees thoroughly, enjoyed the DETOUR as he saw trees not seen before. The forest was very dry but the flora was lovely with all the listed above plants and the following:-

Pine tree moss,  
Wonga Wonga vine,  
Clematis - white,  
Bredemeyera volubilis - blue love creeper and  
Hovea - purple.

Back to Dorothy and Ian's for a very welcome cup of tea. Thank you to our bus driver for getting us to our destination and safely home again all be it a few detours on the way. See you next trip.

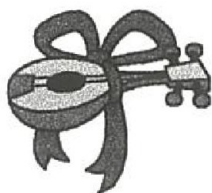
*Thanks to Mary Frost, who travels with her husband Garnet from Killawarra to join the excursions, for this report. I thoroughly enjoyed the scenic detour, too!*

-Lyn.



ORCHIDS seen on our trip: a) Pterostylis curta b & c) Chiloglottis gunnii d) Glossodia minor e) Glossodia major.





## End of Year Breakup

*This year our break-up meeting will be held on*

**Sunday 6th of December**

**at the Kevin Heinze Garden Centre, 39 Weatherby Road, Doncaster**

**(Melways Ref. 47 - H.1), just south of Doncaster Road.**

*We can arrive from 11.30 am. onwards.*

*We will have full use of the facilities of the centre,*

*which has ample cover and seating both outdoors and indoors.*

*There is also an electric BBQ available.*

*The program will include the following:*

- ♦ *Lunch - Please provide your own. Tea and coffee provided.*
- ♦ *Some short videos of interest, including one of the late Albert Jenkins' fernery.*
- ♦ *A demonstration of fern division by our new president, Jan Broughton (see his column for details)*
- ♦ *Our usual raffles - hampers, plants etc.*
- ♦ *Afternoon tea - please bring a plate and share.*

The Kevin Heinze Centre is a self supporting community based organisation that provides recreational gardening activities for people of all ages who have disabilities (refer item in Sept/Oct. 1998 Newsletter, page 76).

As the centre is establishing a fern gully, your committee suggests that you may like to bring along a fern to donate to this project.

***See you on the 6th!!!***



### Membership Form

This form can be used for either renewing your membership or registering new members. It may be removed, photocopied or hand copied. When completed it should be forwarded to:

Membership Secretary, Fern Society of Victoria Inc., P O Box 45, Heidelberg West, Vic, 3081.

Reg. No. A 0002585 E

#### **Fern Society of Victoria Inc.**

Title (Mr, Mrs, Ms etc)..... Given Name(s).....

Surname.....

Address.....

..... State..... Postcode.....

Phone..... FAX.....

Subscription:      Single - \$13.00      Pensioner/Student - \$10.00

(Please circle)      Family - \$15.00      Pensioner Family - \$12.00

Overseas (Airmail) - \$20.00



# BRITISH FERNS

The third and final part of the British Pteridological Society video report

Continued from the last newsletter.

Lyn Gresham

## Coastal Walls and Cliffs

Coastal cliffs in the western and northern parts of Britain and sometimes walls in the vicinity of the sea provide habitats for another group of ferns.

**Maidenhair Fern**, *Adiantum capillus-veneris* is a very distinctive fern that grows in relatively few coastal areas of the south-west, and there almost exclusively on damp, calcareous cliffs. The fronds are divided into numerous fan-shaped segments that are borne on thin, black stalks.

**Sea Spleenwort**, *Asplenium marinum* (Fig. 15) is locally frequent in many coastal areas. It has very fleshy, rigid fronds that are once divided into stalked pinnae.

**Lanceolate Spleenwort**, *Asplenium billottii* is somewhat similar in appearance to the Black Spleenwort though it has a narrower shape with shorter basal pinnae and the pinnae are usually recurved. It is rarely found far from the sea but does penetrate further inland than the Sea Spleenwort.

## The Wet-Foot Brigade

The true **Dickie's Fern**, *Cystopteris dickieana* (Fig. 16) is found in only one area in north east Scotland and nowhere else

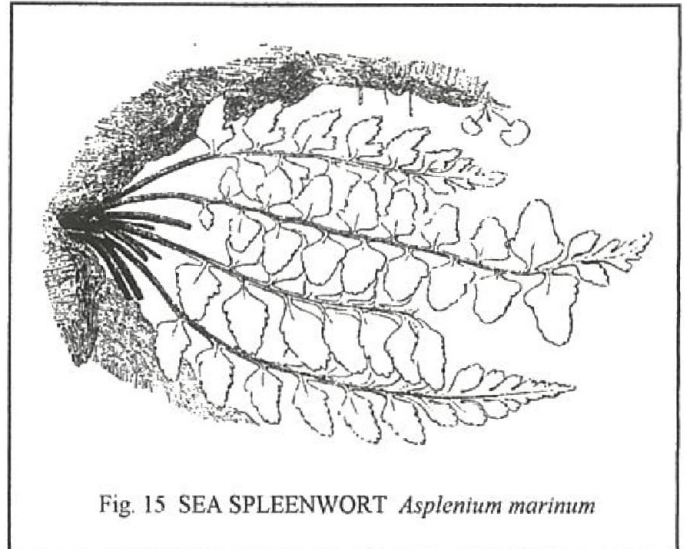


Fig. 15 SEA SPLEENWORT *Asplenium marinum*

in the world. It is easily separated from the common *C. fragilis* by its more congested leaf form.

There are British ferns that require wetter than average conditions to grow successfully. The **Marsh Fern**, *Thelypteris palustris* grows in fens and reed swamps as shown here in East Anglia. The fronds arise singly from creeping, underground rhizomes. The fertile fronds are taller and more erect. (After listing eight different Botanical names for this fern Edward



Fig. 16. DICKIE'S FERN *Cystopteris dickieana*

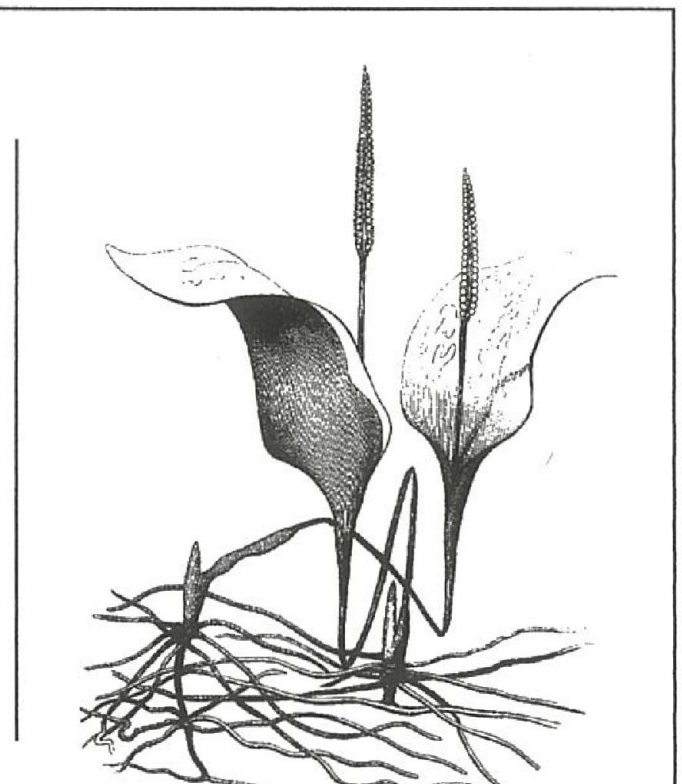


Fig. 17. ADDER'S TONGUE *Ophioglossum vulgatum*



Newman in his book "A History of British Ferns," (1854) from which all the figures in this article have come, says, "This fern is an example of the present state of fern-classification: nothing could possibly exhibit more clearly its chaotic state". I think we've come some way since then but there is still confusion at times.)

**Fen Buckler Fern**, *Dryopteris cristata* is a very rare species found almost exclusively around the Norfolk Broads. The fertile fronds are erect, while the shorter, vegetative fronds spread outwards. Taken in pairs, the triangular pinnae look rather like butterflies.

**Royal Fern**, *Osmunda regalis* prefers acidic, boggy habitats. Dense clusters of sporangia occur on the apical portions of the frond. The lower, fertile pinnules are characteristically strap-shaped.

The **Narrow Buckler Fern**, *Dryopteris carthusiana* is likely only to be found in damp woodlands and marshy areas. It is very similar to the Broad Buckler Fern but with narrower, more erect and paler fronds. The scales on the rachis are pale.

In a rather different wetland habitat we might find the very local and rare **Pillwort**, *Pillularia dobulifera*. It is easily overlooked, as it is similar in appearance to fine-leaved grasses or small rushes. The leaves form dense mats from the creeping, dividing rhizome. Sporangia are in spherical structures called sporocarps.

In grassy areas, very occasionally one might find the inconspicuous **Moonwort**, *Botrichium lunaria*. It is different to the ferns described so far in being a small, fleshy plant with only a single frond divided into fan-shaped pinnae coming off a taller, loosely divided spike that bears large, globular sporangia.

**Adder's Tongue**, *Ophioglossum vulgatum* is another species of unusual appearance found in a wide range of moist, lowland habitats. It can be difficult to find when growing among taller

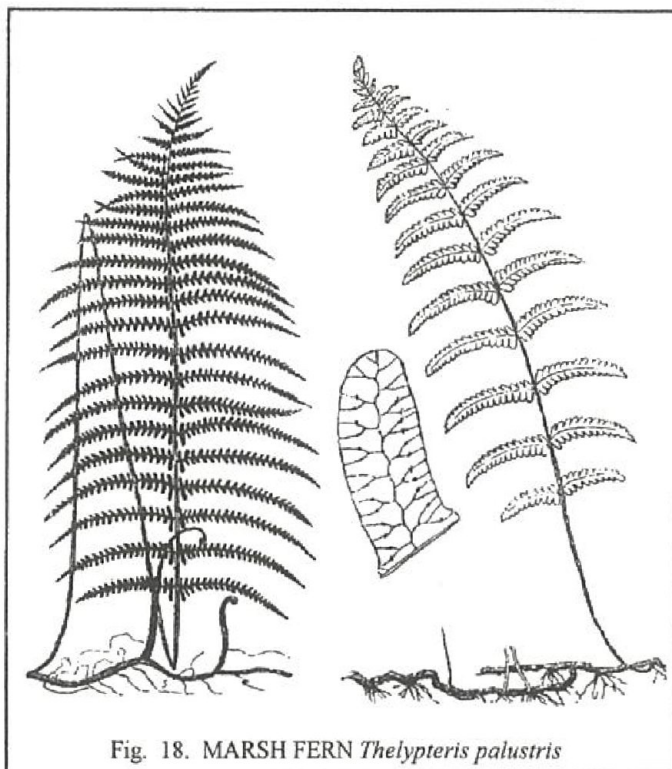


Fig. 18. MARSH FERN *Thelypteris palustris*

herbs. Adder's Tongue is very similar to Moonwort in having a single leaf attached to the side of a fertile spike but it is even less fernlike in having a simple, undivided frond and fertile spike.

Filmy ferns luxuriate in extremely humid sites. The fronds of the extremely rare **Killarney Fern**, *Trichomanes speciosum* (Fig. 17) are translucent and delicate so it can only grow in sites of high humidity combined with permanent running water and shelter.

The other two species of Filmy Ferns do not necessarily require running water. **Tunbridge Filmy Fern**, *Hymenophyllum tunbridgense* is a small fern found in these very humid and shaded conditions. It can form extensive, mat-like colonies with closely growing, thin, translucent fronds which are only a few centimetres long. The sporangia grow in distinctive two-valved indusia. The open mouths of the indusia are finely toothed.

The second Filmy Fern, **Wilson's Filmy Fern**, *Hymenophyllum wilsonii* can be found in the wetter and more shady parts of west and north Britain. The fronds are narrower than those of the Tunbridge Filmy Fern. The pinnae are often recurved and the indusia have smooth, not toothed, margins.

~~~~~

Ferns range in size from tiny, easily overlooked species like the translucent Filmy Ferns or the tufted Woodsias to large, imposing species such as the Royal Fern. The archetypal ferns such as the Male and Shield Ferns are indeed the commonest ferns in Britain but the contrast between them and the others is really quite extraordinary. We've seen that ferns are not confined to shady woodlands and lane banks but various species have adapted to live in quite different habitats throughout Britain.


If you travel around our Island, look out for our varied ferns. We hope that you will be surprised at what you find .... but please respect them and leave them there for others to enjoy. 



Fig. 17. KILLARNEY OR BRISTLE FERN, *Trichomanes speciosum*.





## From Here and There....



### El Nino Rains Kind to Tree ferns

The rains of winter have promoted the growth of tree ferns in our gardens. Barbara Hoshizaki said that the Black tree fern *Cyathea medullaris* is really responding with nice foliage. She also has *Cyathea spinulosa* which was spored in 1993 and which is now producing spores itself.

### Collecting Bostons

Beverly Hitz recommends *Nephrolepis* or Boston ferns as a good plant for beginners because a person can let them dry out, then water and the plants will grow back again. There are plenty of species and varieties of them to collect, and this adds to the enjoyment of the beginning collector.

Beverly lives in Upland, California, where the temperatures can hover around 115°F for days at a time and winter temperatures may drop to 26°F for several nights. She does not have a greenhouse but grows her potted ferns under a lattice structure. Keeping the humidity high by watering before and after work is her summer routine. In winter, if the plants become frost bitten, she trims the fronds to 2" above the soil line and waits for spring for new growth. She said she grew sword and Boston ferns (both of the genus *Nephrolepis*) when she lived in northern Canada.

Most beginners think that ferns, especially Boston ferns, should be kept in the house. Whenever and wherever it is possible these plants should be outdoors.

Air conditioning and heating systems indoors mean dry atmosphere. Grouping numbers of plants on a patio helps to keep the humidity high, and they are easier to water.

### Potting Mix

For most other plants Beverly uses potting soil amended with peat moss and perlite, in the ratio of two parts potting soil and one of each of the others. She recommends transplanting ferns at least once, and preferably twice a year.

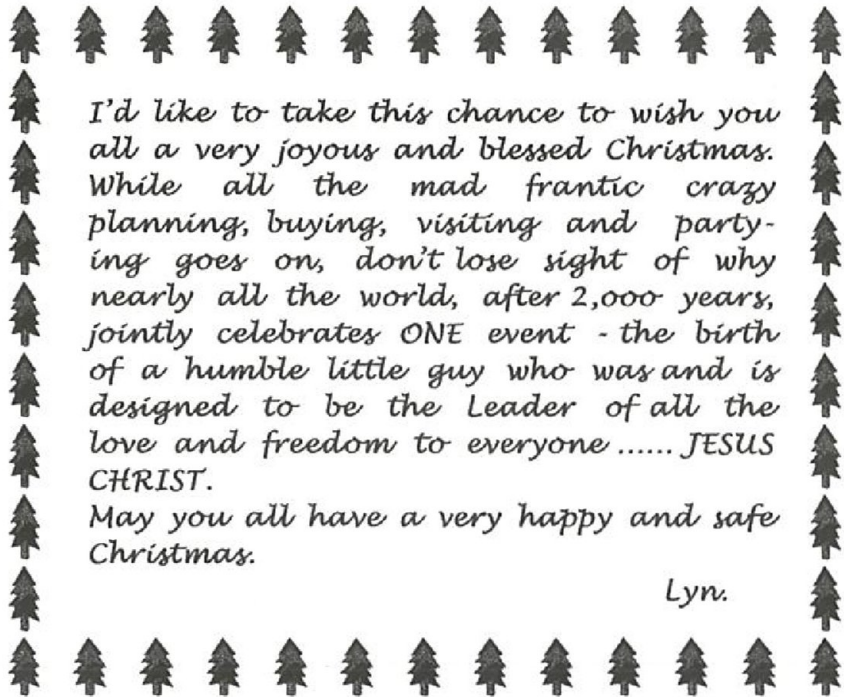
Beverly said that she finds slow-release fertilizers

release too fast in hot weather, and she prefers to use weak fertilizer solution, a capful to a gallon of water.

### Shallow Pots for Adiantums

Some members of the San Diego Fern Society have been growing maidenhair ferns in quite shallow pots. Often they suggest using azalea pots or even plant saucers or so-called pan pots, which are less deep than standard (geranium) pots. This technique seems to counteract the acid conditions which sometimes develop at the bottom of pots. It allows the shallow rhizomes to spread and develop more fronds than in a narrower deep pot. Robin Halley has been successful in growing one *Adiantum* in a ceramic container that is about 6" x 10" by 2-3" deep. It does have drainage holes, which are also necessary.

(Old frying pans work for me - Lyn)



*I'd like to take this chance to wish you all a very joyous and blessed Christmas. While all the mad frantic crazy planning, buying, visiting and partying goes on, don't lose sight of why nearly all the world, after 2,000 years, jointly celebrates ONE event - the birth of a humble little guy who was and is designed to be the Leader of all the love and freedom to everyone ..... JESUS CHRIST.*

*May you all have a very happy and safe Christmas.*

Lyn.

### Recipe for Compost

In the coming months, a wonderful compost pile can be in the making in your yard. The recipe for a good mixture is 1/3 carbon material such as leaves, twigs, paper, other garden trash, 1/3 nitrogen material such as grass clippings, weeds, and other green materials, and 1/3 sand or soil. There should not be more than 10% shredded paper, and NO meat, fat or bones should be used. The ingredients need to be watered to keep them moist and active, and the pile needs to be turned over occasionally to incorporate air for the



composting bacteria. This will accelerate the process greatly.

### Polypodiums

We again remind our readers that *Microsorium*, *Goniophlebium*, *Niphodium*, and *Microgramma* are genera in the family Polypodiaceae. All of them at times have been *Polypodium*. Thus *Polypodium aureum* or *P. pseudoaureum* and *Phlebodium pseudoaureum* refer to the same plant, with the last binomial being the latest classification (in *Flora of North America*).

### Mounting Platyceriums

Ken Ueda, who grows a lot of *Platyceriums*, says he prefers to use a shallow rectangular box as a mounting for his ferns. He puts in brown moss first and tops it with a layer of green moss. The brown moss holds the moisture better, but the green moss is more attractive.

He holds the mosses in the box with light fruit netting stapled to the edges of the box. It is not very visible. Pups can be cut from the main plant and the hole filled with green moss without disturbing the appearance of the parent. No wire is entangled in the young plant which would happen with hardware cloth.

Ken places his plants on a carousel while working on them. He likes to sit on a stool while he works, and this enables him to turn the plant and work on it easily. Also, he keeps all his hand gardening tools, such as shears, wire cutters, etc. in a caddy which he can carry around in the garden.

### A Different Ant Barrier

After a cool spring, we are apt to have a hot dry summer. That means ant season. I have a cat in the house so I am reluctant to use toxic sprays or baits against them.

After a recent invasion, my friend Molly Webster suggested I sprinkle the cat's flea powder at the places where the ants enter the house. It worked!

### Quick Ferns

*Cheilanthes* spores not only keep for a long time, they germinate rapidly. In fact, they can mature within a school semester, which is why one botany teacher has her classes grow *Cheilanthes* spores when they study the life cycles.

*The above items come from LAIFS magazine (details lost, for which I apologise).*

### Nod to Import Thrip Host Plants

Victoria has lifted its restrictions on the import of all plants that are declared hosts of western flower thrip. It follows a gradual increase in the numbers of the pest found in indoor crops in Victoria.

After consulting with industry groups, the DNRE's plant standard branch believed the problem could be

better managed without quarantine restrictions. Toolangi Protection District are maintaining firm control of plants from interstate; they must be from a western flower thrip-free property or must have been treated for the pest.

Western flower thrip carry viruses that can kill plants. They can be detected by banging or tapping flowers or leaves on to a white tray.

*Weekly Times, July 1998.*

### Possum Potion

1 litre cider vinegar,  
4 HOT chillies - red or green, finely chopped  
1 tablespoon ginger  
1 tablespoon pepper.

Steep for two weeks, then spray on plants where possums are eating the leaves - or flowers.

Repeat after rain.

*Hazel Currie, Benalla had this recipe printed in The Wheelbarrow, St James Glen Iris Garden Club's newsletter.*

### Ferns for Flower Arranging

Leather fern is very common in bouquets and floral arrangements. Good results are also reported when using *Aglaomorpha coronans*, *Aglaonaria robertsii* and *Pteris cretica*. They last as well as the flowers.

### Dinosaurs Ate This Fern For Breakfast

A huge, prehistoric fern believed to be the only one of its kind has been unveiled after its discovery was kept secret for twenty years.

The Giant Fern, *Angiopteris evecta*, has thrived in rainforest in a banana plantation in Burringbar Range, near Murwillumbah on the NSW north coast.

Its existence has been kept secret by the State Government because of fears it could be destroyed by vandals.

Scientists say the fern, with 8 metre fronds growing from a woody trunk, is identical to plants of 200 million years ago and genetically distinct from giant ferns found on Fraser Island and parts of North Queensland.

The Giant Fern is believed to be a relic of Gondwanaland, the ancient continent which incorporated Australia, India, Antarctica and parts of Africa and South America.

The National Parks and Wildlife Service have just released a plan on its website to reproduce the fern. The plan will be open for comment for six weeks from its release.

NPWS officer Nigel Cotsell said the Giant Fern could be available in nurseries in five years and that more would be planted in Burringbar Range and in Sydney's Royal Botanic Gardens.

*-Simon Crittle.*

*This newspaper article was given to me at the last FSV Meeting.*



## Speaker Report - July 1998 meeting.

# HOSTAS!!

**Max Moore**

Max collects, propagates and sells hostas and taught most of us a lot about these beautiful plants. He also sells new and secondhand horticultural books and will try to find any that you are seeking. He can be contacted at Tiverton Horticultural Enterprises on 5345 3237.

A *hosta* is a herbaceous perennial, which means it dies down in winter.

It is also a SEMI-shade loving plant, contrary to the information often given that it needs full shade. It is a woodland plant, so grows in dappled shade. For instance, it won't grow under tree ferns (not that much else will). Hostas are native to Japan,

Korea and China, where they grow in woods high up in the mountains.

First introduced to the west in the 1800s, when they were taken to England, the *hosta* is currently North America's best selling perennial. The enthusiasm there can be equated with the Victorian fern craze - they seem to pay enormous prices for anything 'new', which are often indistinguishable from those already available. (*They don't have that on their own, do they?!*) Most of the variations we see in collections seem to arise in cultivation - they don't happen in the wild. They do mutate fairly readily.

Snails love *hostas* so if there are a lot of snails in your garden, vigorous action should be taken to control them. They damage the leaves by chewing (or is it gumming? Do snails have teeth?). However many of the newer cultivars seem to be less attractive to snails so don't suffer as much from their attention.

*Hostas* associate very well with ferns. There is a good contrast between the foliage, which enhances both.

The most striking way to use *hostas* in a garden is to mass plant them. The quickest way of getting lots of stock is to buy lots of plants, but the cheapest way is to wait until they grow into a clump and then divide it. While this is quite satisfactory with many *hostas*, some have the rather unco-operative habit of not increasing themselves, so they need to be tissue cultured.



*Hostas* are grown mainly for their foliage but they do have a rather insignificant, lily-like flower. There is only one that features its flower, *H. plantaginea* which is rather more upright in growth habit than the average *hosta* and bears large, white, scented flowers. The plain green leaves are among the least remarkable of the *hosta* family. Efforts

are being made to cross this with other *hostas* to produce some with good flowers and more striking leaves.

Some *hostas* have a glaucous, bluish 'bloom' on their leaves, similar to a plum, which is attractive but washes or rubs off very easily. For this reason glaucous plants cannot be foliar fed, nor should they be handled more than necessary.

### Some *Hostas* Max Recommends.

#### Gold Standard

This is one of the better ones. Some of the early ones start off with lovely variegations in the spring and then later in the season just turn to green. *Hosta fortunei* 'Albo Picta' and *H. fortunei* 'Aureo' are examples of this. They were widely used in England for the early development of new cultivars. All the newer varieties tend to start off green early in the season and send out progressively more 'coloured' growth from then on.

*Hosta fortunei* 'Aureo Marginata' is a good, vigorous grower with a creamy yellow edge. It was imported and has been tissue cultured here so should be easy to find.

*Hosta crispula*, one that has been around for quite some time, has an attractive curve to the edge of the leaves. It is well worth growing.



**Hosta 'Green Gold'**, a green leaf with cream edge, and another which has a white edge, are both well worth growing as they are good, reliable and vigorous.

### Propagation.

They can be increased by tissue culture or by division. Unfortunately not all hostas can be grown by tissue culture and the other option, division is a very, very slow process. They resent being disturbed so you can't divide them up every year as you can many perennials. If you do, they just get smaller and smaller every year. The clump must be allowed to reach maturity before being divided, then the divisions must mature before again being divided. (*I'm beginning to see why new releases are not cheap! Lyn*).

In order to increase the range of his stock, Max imports tissue cultured plants. A couple of years ago he imported 16 plants which could not be tissue cultured. They had to be quarantined and for all the usual reasons it was a very costly exercise, even though all 16 plants did somehow survive. It is not a realistic option except for very special ones.

The notable exception to the rule regarding dividing hostas is **H. undulata**, with its beautifully undulating, twisted leaves. While most resent disturbance while young, this one must be divided at least every second year and be kept growing vigorously or it gradually loses its variegation. Though it has been available for quite some time it is still in heavy demand because of its outstanding beauty. It is one of the earliest to emerge in spring.

**H. undulata 'Albo-marginata'**, which is known in Britain as 'Thomas Hobb' is a very quick growing one which has a seersucker puckering around the edge. At first glance it can be confused with **H. undulata**.

Hosta leaves are very useful in floral arrangements, where they outlast flowers.

### Cost

When asked about the cost of buying hostas from him, Max replied that he is (*"was", by now!*) selling bare-rooted plants by mail order in a small way this winter, and most are priced at about \$8.00 each. The new releases are about twice that price. When sold, his plants have 5 to 6 'eyes' compared to those available from supermarkets etc. which commonly have one or two.

### When To Divide Plants

Contrary to the information given in most gardening books, in Australia and New Zealand the ideal time to divide your hostas is just as they are coming into spring growth. This is because most of the literature available is quoting for British or American conditions and they have a colder but drier winter than we do. If we divide ours in winter and then have

a lot of rain the plants can actually rot because they are not growing vigorously at this time.

### Sun, Soil, Situation & Sustenance.

Hostas will take full morning sun, right up until midday but need protection during the afternoon. If under shadecloth, hostas don't need more than the 50% one, and the white one is preferable.

Surprisingly, they are quite happy indoors, but the high light level must be provided.

If your hostas are in too much shade, they will soon tell you by losing their colour intensity. Incidentally, the more variegation there is on a hosta's leaves the higher is the light level they need, because they can only photosynthesise through the green parts of the leaves, which contain chlorophyll. Photosynthesis is essential for plants to be able to process and absorb food.

Hostas need at least six weeks of cold winter, which is a bit hard to achieve in the tropics. Refrigeration and cool room storage can suffice. Max's thrived through temperatures of as low as -6°C last winter.

Suitable soil is any good quality Australian Standard potting mix or good garden loam. They are fairly tolerant of moderate pH variations.

They are equally happy in the garden, pots or tubs, the only qualifying note being that they do need to be potted on into a 6, 7 or 8 inch (15 to 20 cm) pot as the clump gets bigger, or they may not mature.

You can feed hostas with slow release or liquid fertilisers and still get your spring flush of new growth and sometimes will be followed by a second flush of growth at about Christmas but the plants store up food much as bulbs do, and the full benefit of feeding isn't seen until the next season.

In conclusion, Max recommended that we try a hosta or two among our ferns as they enhance and brighten the fernery and are truly beautiful in their own right. A well grown hosta also looks sensational in an urn or any stylish container and will complement any decor.

♦♦♦♦

- Report by Lyn Gresham

🌿 🌿 To mark the centenary of the declaration of Wilson's Promontory National Park, a 208 pp book has been released this year entitled, strangely enough, "Wilson's Promontory" and is by Geoff Wescott. Filled with maps, colour photos and suggestions for the best walks, campsites, views and features, it includes plants, animals, history and aboriginal culture. It is available from **UNIREPS**, UNSW Press, Ph. 61 (02) 9664 5420 for \$19.95, post free. Great Christmas gift!-Indigenotes Vol 11 No. 5 July 1998.



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## NEW SOUTH WALES:

**Kanerley Fern Exhibition and Nursery**  
Wholesale and Retail. Phone (049) 872 781.  
204 Hinton Road, Osterley, via Raymond Terrace,  
2324. By appointment.

## QUEENSLAND:

### Moran's Highway Nursery

Wholesale and Retail. Phone (07) 442 1613.  
Bruce Hwy, Woombye (1 km north of Big  
Pineapple; turn right into Kiel Mountain Road).  
P.O. Box 47, Woombye, 4559.

## VICTORIA:

**Andrew's Fern Nursery / Castle Creek Orchids**  
Retail. Phone (03)5826 7285.

Goulburn Valley Highway, Arcadia 3813 (20 km  
south of Shepparton).

Large range of ferns and orchids for beginners and  
collectors.

Open daily 10am - 5pm except Christmas Day.

### Austral Ferns

Wholesale Propagators. Phone (03)5282 3084.  
Specialising in supplying retail nurseries with a  
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Wholesale. Phone (03) 9758 6878. Mon-  
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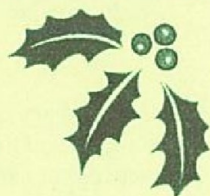
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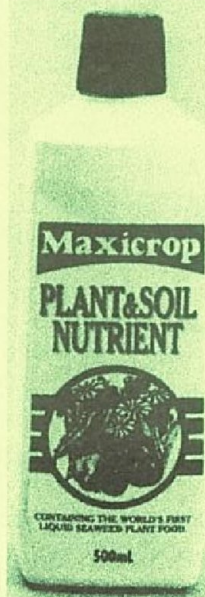
Wholesale and Retail. Phone (03)5235 8444.  
Situated on the Colac-Gellibrand Road, Kawarren  
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