



THE FERN
SOCIETY OF
VICTORIA

NEWSLETTER

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VOLUME 5 NUMBER 6 JULY, 1983

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Dear Member,

"If I bore you, just tell me to stop." So said Mary Frost as she commenced her talk at the June meeting. But there was no way any one of the two hundred members present could have been bored. Mary breezed through all of the natural fern growing areas of north east Victoria, acquainting us with places that very few of us knew. Mary proved to be a humorous and witty speaker with a dedicated attitude to natural history. I was intrigued by Mary's description and photographs of fern mutations in these areas; one a ground fern (*Hypolepis*) and the other a maiden hair (*Adiantum*). It has reminded me of an article I once read concerning the field activities of a fern society in England. The main thrust of these activities was to seek for natural fern hybrids and mutations in their natural habitats.

Our thanks to Mary Frost.

Rita Onley and Lynne Hill are both taking a well earned rest from their task of providing and dispensing tea and coffee at general meetins. Rita and Lynne have dedicated themselves to this very valuable public relations service for the past three years; a task which they leave with our warmest expressions of appreciation.

Next meeting: For the July meeting we have received permission to publicly screen a collection of photographic colour slides from America. My information is that these slides describe a sequence of stages in the development of one man's "fern kingdom".

Establishing an Outdoor Fern Garden
 (Continued from April 1983 issue)

9. ADDITIONAL JOYS:

When the fern garden developed and came to look more and more like a little rain forest, we were delighted to find that tiny native birds were attracted to it. We were keen to make them welcome but were concerned for their safety because of the spasmodic appearances of neighbours cats. To overcome the danger to some extent we made two bird baths from honeycomb rocks by simply working out a small depression in each. We set two solid posts into the ground made them rigid, then mounted and secured the "bird baths" on top. This elevated the baths to about 0.75m (2'6") from the ground which gave the birds enough height to enable them to see any cats approaching. A remarkable side effect of this is that the birds will actually set up a cacophony of warning calls when a cat is present. We have come to recognize these occasions and to know that we are being called upon to despatch the enemy, whatever it may be.

Continued on next page



JULY MEETING

The Society has been fortunate to obtain on loan a set of slides from the U.S.A. depicting the fern collection of Milton Piedra from Florida. His collection is extensive and is reputed to contain over 300 varieties of maiden hair alone.

Chris Goudey has edited the slides and will be presenting them with brief commentary at the meeting on July 14th.

Continued from previous page

We add fresh water to our rock pools every day and every day we are rewarded by the spectacle of little birds bathing in them. The bird species who visit are: Brown Thornbills, Spotted Pardalotes, White Browed Scrubwrens, Silver Eyes, Spinevill and White Plumed Honeyeaters, Grey Fantails and rarely, Rufous Fantail.

To complete the rain forest effect we introduced native epiphytic orchids and found that several species adapted to life in the garden. We have come to expect lovely flowers from them in the spring even though they in turn appear to thrive with very little maintenance.

THE END

with kindest regards
Doug Thomas

SOLID FINANCIAL POSITION FOR THE SOCIETY

As the financial year draws to a close, the Treasurer reported to the June Executive Committee Meeting a credit balance of \$5,702.62.

This situation reflects the excellent response to the Annual Fern Show in March and good response at each monthly meeting to fern sales and the special effort.

As a result of the good financial position, the Society will not increase subscriptions (despite rapidly increasing costs). Also, a considerable part of the funds held are dedicated to implementing the Annual 32 page Magazine which will be published for the first time during the summer 1983/84.

A NOTE FROM TREASURER, JEAN TRUDGEON

A full financial report will be distributed with the August issue of the Newsletter

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Notice is given of the Fourth Annual General Meeting of The Fern Society of Victoria which will be held on Thursday, August 11, 8.00 p.m. at the School Hall, Burnley College, Swan Street, Burnley.

Business transacted will be:

1. To receive and deal with the Executive Committee's Report for the twelve months ending June 30, 1983.
2. To receive and deal with the Treasurer's Report.
3. Election of office bearers for 1983/1984.
4. General Business.

K.N. STUBBS
SECRETARY

N.B. A Series of demonstrations from members will follow the Annual General Meeting.

NOMINATIONS FOR OFFICE BEARERS

Nominations for Office Bearers and Executive Committee must be in the Secretary's hands in writing not less than 14 days prior to the Annual General Meeting only if insufficient nominations have been received previously prior to the election and nominations will be accepted only from financial members.

K.N. STUBBS
SECRETARY

GENERAL BUSINESS AT ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The Annual General Meeting will discuss and vote upon, under General Business, any business matter of which 28 days written notice has been given to the Secretary. Details of any 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.

K.N. STUBBS
SECRETARY

NATIVE FERNS ABOUND IN N.E. VICTORIA

Fern lovers usually think of the Otways and the Dandenongs when they think of where ferns grow in Victoria, according to the Society's June Speaker - Mary Frost. This couldn't be further from the truth according to Mary - and what is more she proved her point admirably with a host of slides of the region.

Mary's talk and slides took in the area covered by the 057 S.T.D. phone area: Wangaratta, Warby Ranges, Mt. Stirling, Mt. Buffalo, Paradise Falls and Powers Lookout through to Beechworth.

A favourite area of Mary's is at Beechworth where one gully she and her husband have found contains at least 30 different varieties of ferns. In addition, there are two species which she has not yet been able to name (Frostii was suggested for one!).

Throughout the region, there are gullies which contain "acres and acres of ferns - some waist high, some with ground ferns more than head high".

During the slide show, Mary showed interesting slides of ferns growing in crevices on the underside of overhanging rock shelves where no rain could reach.

Also shown were sheer rock faces completely covered with sporelings growing in cracks 1½ inches wide with no visible soil to support their life, just a little moisture on the rock face.

Most of the overhanging rocks are accessible and according to Mary well worth the effort to see them.

Some of the gullies - probably best seen by four wheel drive vehicles - extend for 25 km. They have banks completely covered with tree ferns and other varieties. In one particular gully, Mary has found an area of fringe blechnum nudum extending 50 to 60 metres.

Also included in the slides were shots of Mary's three ferneries. These may be viewed by members - but please phone her first.

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ADIANTUM SP. (S.E. QLD)

For the past three years, spore has been offered through the Society's spore bank labelled Adiantum sp. (S.E. Qld). The identity of this fern puzzled me when I first encountered it in the wild in south-east Queensland, not far from Brisbane. I still have conflicting ideas as to its classificaiton and I have outlined two possibilities below that occur to me.

1. A form of Adiantum hispidulum In Queensland the fern grows in close association with the normal form of *A. hispidulum* on fairly open, rocky creek banks. Despite the extra divisions of the fronds, the general pedate shape of *A. hispidulum* is still apparent and the pinnules closely resemble those of *A. hispidulum*. The fronds are rather stiff and harsh, the new growth is a most attractive pink colour, and like *A. hispidulum*, it is quite hardy in Melbourne and grows especially well in the rockery situation with morning sun throughout the year.
2. A hybrid between *A. aethiopicum* and *A. hispidulum*
A. aethiopicum was noted growing in the immediate vicinity of this fern and the division of the fronds could certainly be interpreted as intermediate between those of *A. aethiopicum* and *A. hispidulum*.

What strikes me as an amazing co-incidence is the close resemblance to the American hybrid *A. tracyi* (see Barbara Joe Hoshizaki's "Fern Growers Manual" P. 126). *A. tracyi* is a hybrid between *A. jordanii* and *A. pedatum* and the similarity between these three and *A. sp. (S.E. Qld)*, *A. aethiopicum* and *A. hispidulum* respectively is undeniable.

However, *A. sp. (S.E. Qld)* is fertile and comes true from spore, certainly unusual (although not impossible) for a hybrid.

Regardless of its identity, it is a truly handsome native fern and certainly worthy of propagation, even if it is only known by the unimpressive title of Adiantum sp. (S.E. Qld) for the present.

P.S. - A very similar fern also grows on Dunk Island, in northern Queensland, but as yet sporelings I have growing are still too small to decide whether this fern is the same as the southern fern.

ROD HILL

ADIANTUM SP. (S.E. QLD.)



A HELPFUL HINT:

For those having trouble removing spore from gelatine capsules, the following method was suggested by a member at the last meeting.

It simply involves adding a small quantity (about ½ a capsule) of fine sand (clean and dry) to the capsule, shaking the capsule and then sowing the sand over the top of the normal medium. This would possibly also assist those who have difficulty sowing spore thinly and evenly.

SPORE LIST - JULY

Spore samples may be purchased at monthly meetings or by sending a list of your requirements with 20 cents for each species requested plus 50 cents for packaging and postage to Mr. R. Hill, 41 Kareela Road, Frankston, 3199.

Payment for orders may be made by postage stamp (27 cent stamps preferred where possible) or by cheque (payable to "Fern Society of Victoria").

Instructions on propagation from spore are also still available for an extra 5 cents.

REGULAR SPORE LIST - JUNE 10, 1983

- | | |
|---|-------------------------------------|
| ADIANTUM FORMOSUM (2-83) | ✓ CYATHEA AUSTRALIS (3-83) |
| RADDIANUM (3-83) | BROWNII (3-83) |
| RADDIANUM 'ELEGANS' (3-83) | ✓ CELEBICA (8-81) |
| SP. (S.E. QLD) (2-83) | ✓ COOPERI (2-83) |
| AMPHINEURON TERMINANS (2-82) | ✓ DEALBATA (3-83) |
| ANEMIA MEXICANA (3-83) | ✓ LEICHHARDTIANA (9-82) |
| ARACHNIODES ARISTATA (3-83) | ✓ REBECCAE (8-81) |
| STANDISHII (12-81) | SP. (LARGE/MALAYSIA) (10-82) |
| ASPLENIUM ADIANTUM-NIGRUM (2-83) | SP. (NEW GUINEA) (1-82) |
| TRICHOMANES (3-83) | ✓ CYSTOPTERIS FILIX-FRAGILIS (2-83) |
| ATHYRIUM FILIX-FEMINA 'CRISTATA' (8-81) | DICKSONIA ANTARCTICA (2-83) |
| THELYPTEROIDES (7-81) | FIBROSA (5-82) |
| ✓ BLECHNUM AMBIGUUM (1-83) | YOUNGIAE (N. QLD FORM) (8-81) |
| ✓ CARTILAGINEUM (2-83) | YOUNGIAE (S. QLD FORM) (8-81) |
| ✓ FLUVIATILE (2-83) | ✓ DIPLAZIUM AUSTRALE (2-83) |
| ✓ GREGSONII (1-83) | DOODIA ASPERA (5-83) |
| NUDUM (3-82) | MEDIA (2-83) |
| ✓ NUDUM 'FURCANS' (6-83) | DRYOPTERIS CARTHUSIANA (7-82) |
| ✓ PENNA-MARINA (3-83) | ERYTHROSORA (2-83) |
| ✓ VULCANICUM (4-82) | GYMNOSORUS (3-83) |
| ✓ WATTSII (5-82) | MARGINALIS (7-81) |
| CHEILANTHES TENUIFOLIA (3-83) | SP. (FILIX-MAS?) (8-82) |
| ✓ CHRISTELLA DENTATA (3-83) | SPP. (MIXED) (3-83) |
| ✓ CULCITA DUBIA (3-83) | GLEICHENIA MICROPHYLLA (3-82) |

- LASTREOPSIS HISPIDA (10-81)
 ✓ SMITHIANA (2-83)
 WALLERI (8-81)
 SP. (RUFESCENS?) (8-81)
 SP. (TENERA?) (8-81)
 ✓ LINDSAEA MICROPHYLLA (1-82)
 LYGODIUM SP. A (MALAYSIA) (10-82)
 SP. B (CIRCINNATUM?/MALAYSIA) (10-82)
 MARATTIA SP. (SALICIFOLIA?) (6-83)
 MICROLEPIA SP. (N. QLD) (8-81)
 PELLAEA FALCATA (3-83)
 FALCATA NANA (12-81)
 PARADOXA (12-81)
 ROTUNDIFOLIA (3-83)
 VIRIDIS (8-82)
 PHYLLITIS SCOLOPENDRIUM (3-83)
 PITYROGRAMMA CALOMELANOS (8-81)
 PLATYCERIUM SUPERBUM (6-81)
 POLYSTICHUM ACROSTICHOIDES (7-81)
 FORMOSUM (5-82)
 LENTUM (3-82)
 PROLIFERUM (1-82)
- PTERIS COMANS (2-83)
 PACIFICA (8-81)
 TREMULA (2-83)
 UMBROSA (2-83)
 VITTATA (2-83)
 RUMOHRA ADIANTIFORMIS (CAPE FORM) (3-83)
 ADIANTIFORMIS (NATIVE) (3-83)
 SPHAEROSTEPHANOS HETEROCARPUS (8-81)
 STENOCHLAENA PALUSTRIS (10-82)
 STICHERUS FLABELLATUS (1-83)
 TAENITIS BLECHNOIDES (10-82)
 THELYPTERIS SPP. (CANADA) (8-81)
 TODEA BARBARA (2-83)
 GROUND-FERN (LARGE/BIPINNATIFID/MALAYSIA) (10-82)

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

Mr. Noel Watkins of Sunbury, Victoria, writes that articles by myself in April issue and Alberts Jenkins' in June issue were misleading with regarding to fertilizing of ferns. Noel quotes books by Barbara Jo Hoshizaki, Gillean Dunk, D.L. Jones and C.J. Goudey, and D.L. Jones and S. Chamesha. All state that ferns should not be fertilized in their dormant or resting period but mainly when growing vigourously.

My Notes from the Editor in April issue were written early March and were an Autumn program not winter. I base my findings on the following observations. Native spreads a small amount of wood ash over our soil during bushfires usually late summer and early autumn. This supplies calcium, phosphorus and potash in small amounts and when autumn rains commence, ferns make excellent growth, particularly tree ferns, as Mary Frost stated at our June meeting. I feel that ferns which can only absorb nutrients through moisture, having been through a long dry period need nutrients available to replenish reserves in roots, trunks and fronds for the flush of early spring growth. Also, most animals which hibernate usually feed up well before settling down for winter.

Albert Jenkins' discussion at our June meeting on Dicksonia Antarctica of which he has much experience, stated that he uses Maxicop and Nitrosol 50/50 at 1/3 strength during winter. Maxicrop, basically organic potash plus minerals and Nitrosol - blood and bone based, are slowly available for long periods. It is my belief that Dicksonia Antarctica which can grow in very cold climates does absorb nutrients in winter, particularly if growing in a light textured medium such as Albert's.

I hope this explains our articles more clearly and I do apologise that my notes were in the April issue when they should have been in the March issue.

Sincere thanks to Noel Watkins for this letter asking for clarification.

THE EDITOR

BEGINNERS' PAGE

Our President has asked me to devote a page each month for all those who are "beginners" to the enjoyment of collecting and growing ferns.

My first suggestion would be - don't rush in and buy all types of ferns until you have been along to some meetings and learnt which ferns are best for your situation. Then stay with one or two particular families of ferns until you have mastered their idiosyncracies: Davallias, Nephrolepis cyathea and possibly adiantums are good starters.

The next and rather exciting step is to grow one or two of these families from spore. There is excellent assistance available from Rod Hill at our meetings and his spore bank is very comprehensive, of excellent quality (I can vouch for that personally) and extremely well set up.

Now and perhaps the most important step is to write to me with your questions and problems and so make this section of our newsletter of great benefit to all "Beginners".

Finally, I will repeat some of the terms used by the "experts" and their meanings from an earlier edition.

Rhizome	Rootlike stem lying along or under soil
Stolons	Recline or prostrate branch that takes root at the tip and grows a new plant.
Frond	Leaf of the fern.
Stipe	Leaf stalk.
Rachis	Midrib of frond.
Crozier	Young fronds (sometimes called foddlehead's).
Pinnae	One of the primary divisions of a frond.
Sporeangium	Spore case
Indusium	Cap or covering of Sori
Annulus	Ring around Sori acts as a spring to open sori and release spore.
Spore	A single cell which becomes free and is capable of developing into a new plant.
Bulbill	A small plantlet taken from frond of a fern (most often from asplenium Bulbiferum).



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BOOK SALES

Name of Book	Author	*Price	Postage & Packaging	Total
Australian Ferns & Fern Allies	D.L. Jones & S. Clemesha	\$15.40	\$2.55	\$17.95
Exotic Ferns In Australia	D.L. Jones & D.J. Goudey	\$11.50	\$2.55	\$14.05
Fern Growers Manual	B.J. Hoshizaki	\$9.00	\$2.55	\$11.55
Flora N.E. N.S.W.	Armadaile	\$3.50	\$1.10	\$4.60
Growing Ferns	Ray Best	\$3.20	\$1.50	\$4.70
Ferns of Victoria & Tasmania	N.A. Wakefield	\$3.00	\$1.50	\$4.50
Ferns for Modern Living	E. Davenport	\$3.00	\$1.10	\$4.10
What Pest is That?	F. Hutchison	\$10.00	\$2.55	\$12.55
Ferns To Know & Grow	F. Gordon Foster	\$8.00	\$2.50	\$10.50
Ferns For The Home Garden	Gillean Dunk	\$8.00	\$2.55	\$10.55

* PLEASE NOTE - These prices apply for Victoria only, interstate orders are welcome. Please write to Lorraine Goudey, Lot 8, Cozens Road, LARA Victoria, 3212, for interstate prices.



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SOMETHING NEW

This new column is for your use, for those members trying to procure a fern that they would like but are unable to find and those who may have some ferns they would like to sell or exchange.

Our first requests come from Bill Taylor.

BUY	SELL	EXCHANGE	PLANT	MEMBER	PHONE
✓			Adiantum Pedatum	Bill Taylor	277 4310 63 3725
✓			Adiantum Imbricatum	Bill Taylor	277 4310 63 3725
✓			Adiantum Cultratum	Bill Taylor	277 4310 63 3725
✓			Adiantum Phillipense	Bill Taylor	277 4310 63 3725

BUYERS' GUIDE TO FERN NURSERIESQUEENSLAND

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VICTORIA

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Retail

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Garfield North, Victoria

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Continued on next page

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VICTORIA

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≡≡≡ DIARY DATES ≡≡≡

Thursday
July 14

Chris Goudey - showing
slides of fern collection
of Milton Piedra of Florida.

Thursday
August 11

Annual General Meeting
and demonstrations.

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

VENUE OF MEETINGS: Burnley Horticultural
School Hall, Burnley

TIME OF MEETINGS: 8 p.m.



PREPARED AND PRINTED
FOR THE FERN SOCIETY
OF VICTORIA



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