

## CYCAD &amp; ZAMIAD STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER NO. 10

SOCIETY FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

GYMPIE ULD REGION  
- LIBRARY -

MAY - JUNE, 1982

LEADER: L.P. BUTTASSISTANT: BRIAN RUNNEGAR

Dear Members,

Once more the newsletter and as usual it is a bit late.

Dan Stallard has been quite active in his field collections and studies of the genera and according to his reports and the one sample caudex I still have, *Cycas calcicola* emerges as the silvery foliage cycad reported to me by Harold Caulfield. It comes from the precise area mentioned and is very silvery in foliage.

On studying the Mt. Morgan specimens at close range I cannot see any marked difference in seed size, pinnae size or caudex size to the species around Mt. Archer, Rockhampton or around other extreme coastal areas nearby. I still take it to be a variant *cycas media*.

The specimen of *Mac. Pauli-guilielmi* collected from Gympie and potted with full caudex exposed is doing fine. The three rachis have now matured and are fully clothed with pinnae. This is the narrow leaf form typical of Tin Can Bay, Rainbow Beach and Toolara.

The wider pinnae form from Elliott River near Bundaberg is still a mystery but I hope to get a couple of caudices for study, soon. Noel McCormack reports it is still prolific in his area. Possibilities are it is a variant or a cross. With what, I can only guess. The boundaries of *Mac. platyrachis* are too far away it would seem. This little beauty inhabited the Blackdown Tablelands only.

A few members have written to me and for this I am grateful, also there has been response financially. We now have about half the fees paid, so if you think you may have forgotten please ask me.

Of extreme interest to us all is the following text from the American "Cycad Newsletter" referring to a paper by Robert S. Hill, Aust. J. Bot. 28:105-22-1980. Three new Eocene period Cycads are reported in Eastern Australia. This paper describes a new cycad genus *PTEROSOMA* R.S. Hill (two species *P. ZAMIOIDES* R.S. Hill and *P. ANASTOMESANS* R.S. Hill) and a new species of *LEPIDOZAMIA* (*L. FOVEOLATA* R.S. Hill) with fine illustrations of the fossils and scanning electron micrographs of selected epidermal features of the leaves.

These discoveries add considerably to our knowledge of the floristic composition of the Australian tertiary period. After studies with other Tertiary cycads it is considered that *PTEROSOMA* represents an extinct line.

Along with other reports of tertiary cycads the discovery supports the theory that cycads had a greater geographical pattern, range, and diversity in Australia during the Tertiary than at present.

Recently, while holidaying at Rockhampton, I was taken by a friend to see the work being carried out by Dan Arien of Yeppoon. This involves meristem tissue cultures with *Bowenia serrulata*. We also travelled on to Stoney Creek where one literally walks on great beds of *Bowenia serrulata*. It still grows in abundance in this area which is a Forestry Park reserve so at least this large section of them should become preserved.

Even in its largest viewed specimens the fronds I have now seen do not compare in actual size with the *Bowenia spectabilis* of Pararella Park, Innisfail or the stands near King Ranch inland from Tully. However the many small clumps growing along the central track and hillslope makes it quite evident, that here is a species well worthy of cultivation and one that would have great commercial value as a potted plant. Of interest to mention were the large six (6) metre plants of *Banksia integrifolia*? These had orange to yellow blooms quite different to the one I know, then the leaf form was serrated. Also noted nice stands of the local native *Saint-Paulia Baeua hygroskopica* with deep mauve blooms, these were rock ledge inhabitants, growing alongside the abundant *Macrozamia miquelli*.

Did I say, abundant, well that is an under-statement. I photographed hillsides of this miquelli form and collected one cone of seed. The fronds are much darker than the local Brookfield type and the cones smaller than the West Gympie form.

With any luck we should have a seed bank operating in a few months. Please send any spare seed to either myself or Brian Runnegar. Addresses in last newsletter.

Thank-you,

LEN BUTT.

*Palm/ycca society Carnarvon bus trip*  
9 10 11 12 July \$66.75 all  
myself interested, *include*

---