

ASSOCIATED SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS  
INDIGENOUS CYCAD, ZAMIAD AND PALM STUDY GROUP NO. 38

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Dear friends,

Once again June and once again subscriptions are all now due. So let's have an orderly flow this year, as stragglers are very confusing. This year is very important, as I am making an all out effort to have another booklet written which will combine active members.

Enclosing a new data sheet for Cycas so please use it whenever you are in Cycas country. If you have good cycas prints to be perused for the booklet, please enclose negatives also. If slides, send me a copy, the group funds will pay for this.

A big welcome to new members from all of us in the group. I wish also to thank Bob Dinte and Irene Champion for their help while I was photographing around Mackay in May.

- Len Butt



Cycas Armstrongii

Photo - Bob Jones

This month found me in the Mackay district, with two very active members. Irene Champion, a real live wire of SGAP enthusiasm, and Bob Dinte who came down especially from Finch Hatton.

Bob and I went rambling as far as Kathu which is approximately half way along the Bruce Highway toward Proserpine. Here we viewed a large pocket of the typical cycas media. I am not now of an agility to go climbing slopes, but we got up amongst these plants with great enthusiasm, because they were in all stages of frond and seed bearing.

One camera of mine had working problems but still I managed. Shots were taken of media with a good ascending apex of sporophyll and green seed, which also had pendant yellow seed on the same plant.

The habitat was a scrubby hillside and the plants lined most gullies right up onto ridges. As usual they showed signs of burning off. Largest specimens about 3 metres, a few having double caudices. One clump I photographed provided one with new uncoiling fawn fronds, one with apply green uncoiled fronds and yet another with ripe pendant seed. In all plants viewed the mature frond crown falls horizontally to sit straight across with tips hanging down. The following day we headed for Cape Hillsborough National Park and to Hidden Valley.

This walk into the Valley is a real experience. Sheltered by a sheer overhanging cliff on one side, the circuit track accomodates the largest stand of *Ptychosperma elegans* (solitaire palm) I have yet seen. Thousands of palms going right up the cliff face, and growing in abandon and continuing across the valley floor. Photography of any quality is difficult without good flash equipment.

This palm is a real delight as a subject for planting in smaller gardens and has great aesthetic value. The *Alexandrae* palm is now our most commercial sold native palm and the solitaire deserves to be up there, also.

Driving back toward Mackay we found another pocket of *Cycas media* growing on hillsides each side of the road. I struggled through tall grass to get more shots because here the new frond crowns were rather beautiful and crowns of upright were everywhere. The sun shining through up to 30 new rhachis is something to see. I counted 4 ovules to a pendant microsporophyll appendage in all cases. Caudices were mostly 15cm across, although really large plants went to 25 cm's.



CYCAS  
ARMSTRONGII



SEED  
DETAIL

PHOTOS -  
BOB JONES

Cycas Data Sheet

1. Identification. CYCAS ARMSTRONGII
2. Habitat. 100 kms E from Darwin, Arnhem Highway, (Mt Bungle) 131°35'E  
12°52'S  
Hilly, Granite boulders, dark grey sandy soil (humus), Tropical,  
1200 mm P.O., Eucalypts, Manchenia, speargrass.
3. Trunk. Ht. Ave: 1.5M Dia. Ave: 85 mm PLB. No Branching. 80% single  
MAX: 3.14+ MAX: 120 mm 18% double  
Suckering Yes (several plants with single sucker on trunk.) 2% more than
4. Female Cone. Sp./crown Nil. Ovules/sp. Nil ave, Nil max. Out of season  
for seed -  
(only one plant  
with three seeds)  
Ht. of sp. Nil. Seed Color dark green, mottles of yellow & scale orig. Nil ripe.
5. Male Cone. Ht. Nil Dia. Nil (1/4), Nil (1/2) Nil (3/4).  
Peduncle ht. Nil Dia. Nil, Spor. rows Nil horizontal  
Nil vertical.
6. Leaves. No./flush Ave 40 max 55 Length leaf Ave 750 Max 830 rachis Ave 710 mm, Max 820 mm  
Spines 0 to 40 No. per in. 0 to 8. Spines located none within 20 mm of leaf base  
along petiole in pairs or alternate
7. Leaflets. Pairs/leaf Ave 106 mm Length at top Ave 60 mm middle Ave 130 mm  
MAX 113 mm MAX 85 mm max 152 mm  
bottom Ave 90 mm Decurrent Only in top 1/3. Midrib Above & below prominent  
MAX 110 mm few in leaf
- Color/luster Above: olive green - skin surface - mottled with yellow  
below: lighter green - matt surface - mottled (ave. 5 mm wide & smooth)
8. Other.

- Generally distribution related to Granite outcrop 4kms x 2kms
- Most easterly location of known distribution
- Change of season, deciduous plant, presently losing leaves, some plants completely barren, others full green, most mottled & brown leaf colour.
- Cone / seed finished, new growth not present, some sign of sporophylls & seed remain No. Tomentum
- Leaves arched back with small twist near end.

Contributed by DON STALLARD

Information gathered 22 April 1989.

Cycas Data Sheet

1. Identification. \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Habitat. \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

3. Trunk. Ht. \_\_\_\_\_ Dia. \_\_\_\_\_ PLB. \_\_\_\_\_ Branching. \_\_\_\_\_

Suckering \_\_\_\_\_.

4. Female Cone. Sp./crown \_\_\_\_\_, Ovules/sp. \_\_\_\_\_ ave, \_\_\_\_\_ max.

Ht. of sp. \_\_\_\_\_, Seed Color \_\_\_\_\_ orig. \_\_\_\_\_ ripe.

5. Male Cone. Ht. \_\_\_\_\_ Dia. \_\_\_\_\_ (1/4), \_\_\_\_\_ (1/2) \_\_\_\_\_ (3/4).

Peduncle ht. \_\_\_\_\_ Dia. \_\_\_\_\_, Spor. rows \_\_\_\_\_ horizontal  
\_\_\_\_\_ vertical.

6. Leaves. No./flush \_\_\_\_\_, Length leaf \_\_\_\_\_ rachis \_\_\_\_\_.

Spines \_\_\_\_\_ No. per in. \_\_\_\_\_, Spines located \_\_\_\_\_.

7. Leaflets. Pairs/leaf \_\_\_\_\_, Length at top \_\_\_\_\_ middle \_\_\_\_\_

bottom \_\_\_\_\_, Decurrent \_\_\_\_\_, Midrib \_\_\_\_\_.

Color/luster \_\_\_\_\_.

8. Other. \_\_\_\_\_  
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Contributed by \_\_\_\_\_  
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