

ASGAP/PALM & CYCAD STUDY GROUP
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Weather & plant behaviour : Once again our local weather has been most peculiar, being unusually mild through winter, then abnormally cool all through spring. Brisbane had its coldest November day on record, & nights below 10 degrees C. were common throughout spring. Then suddenly summer arrived, with Brisbane's hottest (40 degrees C.) January day on record on January 20th, after weeks of top temperatures in the 20's. We are always hotter in summer than Brisbane, & colder in winter, being slightly inland. Our hottest day was also January 20, at 44 degrees, & 43 the day after, then 36, & then back to 2 weeks of weather in the high 20's again, cooler than usual for this time of year. That brings things up to the present.

By late June 1999 all *Cycas calcicola* & *C. maconochiei* plants were dormant, 2 *C. megacarpa* were fully dormant, & *C. armstrongii* & *C. 'kennedyana'* plants were looking tatty ; their leaves did not fully whiten until just before getting a flush of new leaves, which for the biggest plant of each was 3-11-99 (*kennedyana*) & 5-11-99 (*armstrongii*). So these 2 are back to their normal time of flushing. The 2 *C. calcicola* & my lone *C. canalis* waited until 3-2-'00, & were presumably persuaded spring had arrived by the 2 days of heatwave a fortnight earlier. A large *C. megacarpa* which had been leafless for 2 years started to put out a new leaf on 1-8-99, came to a quick halt, & recommenced growth on 12-11-99, putting out 6 normal leaves & the one short one initiated in August. One *C. megacarpa* is just starting to flush today (8-2-00), after 2 months of dormancy, & 3 others have last year's leaves still looking quite respectable, but have made no new ones.

The large *C. kennedyana* which started to flush on 3-11-99 had a firmly attached but substantial sucker, which did not flush with its parent, but waited another 16 days. Last summer the parent coned but did not flush, while the sucker started to flush on 29-1-99. The *C. cairnsiana* plants flushed in late October through November.

Publications : The PACSOA cycad book is still ready to roll, but waiting on funds. The latest issue of the PACSOA journal, 'Palms & Cycads' Nos. 64 & 65, which I received 2 days ago, consists almost entirely of extracts from Tony Rodd's revision of the genus *Livistona* in Australia ; A.N. Rodd (1998) *Telopea* 8: 49-153. I still have not seen the *Telopea* article. The 'Palms & Cycads' article includes colour photographs of all species, taken by members, plus keys & distribution maps. I don't intend to duplicate their excellent efforts. Rodd has altered the spelling of the graceful small northern Kimberleys (Yes, I reckon they sound better in the plural. No one ever said 'The Kimberley' when I was young) palm *L. loriphylla* to *lorophylla*, since the original author incorrectly adapted a Latin word into a Greek context. Almost all *Livistona* spp. are very hardy, although the tropical ones are mostly very slow in the south. Most hate being transplanted.

New Members : Welcome to new members James van bree of Wahroongah, N.S.W., Avril & Lance Denby of Picnic Bay, Qld., & Leza Bennetts of Bangalow, N.S.W. Leza brought me some seeds of a yellow-fleshed (in the fruit) form of *Lepidozamia peroffskyana*.

I shall put an address list, of members, in the next newsletter. Please advise me if anyone does not wish to be included.