

SOCIETY FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

INDIGENOUS PALM STUDY GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 2

AUGUST - SEPTEMBER, 1984 ISSUE

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Greetings to members and new members.

As initially stated before this group was formed it is very necessary for the function of a study group that at least fifty per cent of members be active and participate. All this means is that I need your letters occasionally advising me of how you grow your own palms, palms you have seen, whether in the wild or growing in a friend's garden or perhaps if seen in the wild, photographed for identification.

One other study group I am involved in sometimes has extreme difficulties just because we have about only six active people.

Primarily a study group is for all to study and inquire about a particular genus. It loses function if information is dependant on one, as there are plenty of written books to supply what is already known.

So let us all get together and do the correct function of this group, and make this a means of learning more of the principles in our own country.

To start the ball rolling here are a few impressions of palms I have come across in my own travels here.

Carnarvon Gorge is one place that harbours a Livistona, that has not yet had an official naming.

I have heard that Tony Rodd of New South Wales herbarium has named it Livistona rigidus, before we get specific about this I would like all members especially in New South Wales to check on this statement.

The palm in question grows in groves, mostly along the creeks of the gorge and carries its fans to the base until quite a sizeable plant. At maturity this really fine *Livistona* is clean trunked and has a thick crown of leaves. Seed is small and I have found very viable even if picked from the ground with fruit casing already gone.

Another unnamed *Livistona* occurs near Taroom and along the Palm Tree Creek and Dawson River areas, back toward the ranges. At one junction where a road bridge occurs the palms grew in dense array. There is only small thorny spines along the leaf stems unlike the fierce thorns of other *Livistonas*.

To give some identification to both palms they are so far tagged *Livistona Dawson River* and *Livistona Carnarvon Gorge* which, although explicit, not in the least botanical. Further to these is the very similar *Livistona* found in the areas of Blackdown Tablelands. All three species of *Livistona* respond quite well in cultivation and germinate freely in peat moss and sand mediums.

Other apparent undescribed *Livistona* are *Livistona Eungella Range* which occurs only in the Eungella range west of Mackay on high country.

Similar to *L. australis* but believed to be distinct *Livistona "cooktown"* a tall fan palm from Cape York peninsular growing along Endeavour River, Bathurst Bay and Flinders Islands, similar but distinct to *L. benthamii* and *L. drudei*.

Livistona Kimberlus is also an undescribed species with similarities to *L. eastonii* and *Livistona loriphylla* it occurs in the central Kimberley Districts of Western Australia.

Latest books to hand written in Australia should really help to clear a lot of confusion among our "mystery" palms.

Authors such as Tony Rodd and David Jones are to be commended on their palm study, and the publication of these books.

Here below according to latest literature are the Livistonas we grow here:-

- Livistona alfredii of Western Australia
- Livistona australis of Victoria, New South Wales & Queensland
- Livistona benthamii of Northern Territory and Queensland
- Livistona decipiens of Queensland
- Livistona drudei of Queensland
- Livistona eastonii of Western Australia
- Livistona humilis of Northern Territory
- Livistona inermis of Northern Territory
- Livistona loriphylla of Western Australia
- Livistona mariae of Northern Territory
- Livistona muelleri of Queensland
- Livistona rigida of Northern Territory & Queensland
- Livistona "Blackdown" of Queensland
- Livistona Carnarvon of Queensland
- Livistona Cooktown of Queensland
- Livistona Eungella of Queensland
- Livistona Kimberlies of Queensland
- Livistona paluma range of Queensland
- Livistona Victoria River of Northern Territory & Western
Australia