

ASSOCIATION of

S. G. A. P. Fern Study Group



Newsletter Number 94

ISSN 0811-5311

DATE - SEPTEMBER, 2001

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PENDING RESIGNATION OF TREASURER/SECRETARY – Joan Moore has advised that she will resign as Treasurer/Secretary of the ASGAP Fern Study Group at the end of December 2001. As Editor I would like to thank Joan for the work she has done for the group and for helping to ensure that membership lists are up to date and that reports are readily available. As I am relatively isolated, being the only member in Ballarat, good communication with Joan has enabled a reasonably smooth process for producing the Newsletter. I am sure all members would like to wish Joan well and thank her for her very valuable contributions over many years.

VACANCY IN THE ABOVE POSITIONS – Joan has given advanced notice of her resignation to enable members to consider nominating for the position/s. She indicates that the work mostly occurs at the beginning of the year when subscriptions come in and at the end when the Treasurers Statement needs to be done for inclusion in the Newsletter. I'm sure Joan would be pleased to speak to anyone contemplating these positions.

THE CHINESE BRAKE

Contributed by Ron Wilkins

While working in Guangzhou (Canton) recently, I was pleased to recognize an old friend Pteris vittata, the Chinese brake. In Sydney, the most typical occurrence is on decaying mortar in old brick walls in the inner suburbs. It's the same in Guangzhou, which must be close to heaven for this fern with frequent sun, rain, warmth and old brick walls everywhere except in the centre of the city where the ubiquitous steel and glass constructions pose a hostile environment for all ferns.

Pteris vittata is a Linnaean genus and species, described along with several other species of Pteris in 1753. The type location is given as 'Habitat in China beck'. From 1685, foreign interests were given permission to trade in Guangzhou by the Qing government so it is even possible that the type specimen of the fern that Linnaeus described was collected there. In any case it has been known in the vernacular as the Chinese brake for a long time.

In Sydney it is less commonly found established on Hawkesbury Sandstone, a Triassic fluvialite deposit with low calcium content covering most of the Sydney Basin. However, you can see it on sandstone cliffs near the opera house where it is likely to be getting its calcium fix from the concrete footings of the wall above. In my garden, about 20 km north of the Sydney CBD, established on the shale formation above the Hawkesbury Sandstone, this handsome fern grows well. Knowing how important sticky date pudding, bread and butter pudding and other comfort foods are to me, I plant P. vittata prized from inner city walls with chunks of old mortar.

The world distribution of this fern is odd, and one is at first tempted to wonder if it has simply followed brick walls around the tropical, sub-tropical and temperate regions of the world. Small plants had even colonised the two year old wall around my hotel in Guangzhou so it can spread quite rapidly in the right environment. And the spores of *P. vittata* have very long viability according to Jones (1987). In America *P. vittata* is regarded as introduced. But it does not seem to be so regarded where it occurs in New Guinea, Polynesia, Indonesia, Japan, Africa and neighbouring islands, and in Australia where it is recorded from some weirdly isolated places such as the Buchan limestone district in Victoria (and not from other Victorian limestones) and the Wittenoon Gorge in the Hamersley Ranges, W.A. Are these all the same variety? Was it more widespread during pluvial periods in the past? And why is it not recorded from many other apparently suitable limestone areas in Australia? Why did Linnaeus use a Chinese example as the type when *P. vittata* is widespread in the Mediterranean region? Though it will grow on other calcium-rich substrates, I wonder what its distribution was in the mid 18th Century before so many brick walls were built around the world? Perhaps someone else has some ideas on these questions.

Ref. Jones, D. L., 1987 Encyclopaedia of Ferns. Lothian, Port Melbourne.

NOTES FROM S.E. QLD. GROUP - A.S.G.P. FERN STUDY GROUP

PROPAGATING BY SPORE MEMBERS TRIALS.

Compiled by Irene Cullen

The August meeting at Claire Shackel's home was well attended. Not only did we enjoy viewing her two fern houses - one devoted entirely to the growing of ferns by spore - but viewing her garden, perched on the edge of a steep gully. As raising ferns by spore was our topic, Claire took us through the method she uses. Firstly she sterilises her peat by micro waving it - very wet - for ten minutes. Using plastic containers which will fit into large drink bottles. These she has prepared by cutting the base off about a third of the way up the bottle. After planting the spore, she inserts the container into the top half of the bottle, then fits the base over the open end to form a perfect humidity crib. This is placed long ways on the fernery shelf and occasionally finely sprayed with water. She is having good though slow results. She pricks out the early developed sporlings into another container until big enough to be individually potted and allowing later germinating spore a little more space.

Nev Deeth, another member, uses an altogether different approach. He packs his sterilised peat onto slices of brick, (about 5 centimetres deep). These he also individually places in a larger container, made from large plastic milk bottles, cut off just at the start of the handle, leaving a very shallow depression to hold a little water in the bottom. He uses a plastic bag to enclose the container. Nev seems to be having slightly faster results than Claire, however this may only be the variety of spore being trialed. Nev has had good results with *Platyserium*. He had some good specimens between 10 and 15 cms across. The question was which way does one place them on the slab. There was much debate and a lot of doubt about the placing of the young *Platyserium*. Has anyone had any experience? Please share your knowledge with us.



OUTING TO HIGH TOR, MALENY - Sunday 1 JULY, 2001

Fourteen members enjoyed a visit to the property, High Tor at Maleny. Weather was good, and first of all we enjoyed a very brief tour of the extensive garden, concentrating on the view from the lookout, and the ferns cultivated nearby.

Next, we moved to the large area of original rain forest which stretches down to the creek, and which is part of the headwaters of the Mooloolah River. All enjoyed the short walk along the track through the level area of the rainforest. The majority of members took part in the scramble down to the creek, along it for a short distance, and then back to the track. The fern highlights were the two filmy ferns which Peter found along the creek. Other highlights were occurrences of the Lomandra-like *Romnaldia strobilacea* and the Mopoke which we disturbed on the climb back up to the track.

Our thanks go to our generous hosts, Greg. and Charmaine Wightman. HIGH TOR fern list 1 JULY, 2001 follows.

GENUS SPECIES

<i>Adiantum diaphanum</i> A maidenhair fern	<i>Diplazium australe</i> Austral lady fern
<i>Adiantum formosum</i> A maidenhair fern	<i>Doodia aspera</i> Prickly rasp fern
<i>Adiantum hispidulum</i> A maidenhair fern	<i>Doodia</i> sp.
<i>Arachniodes aristata</i> Prickly shield fern	<i>Lastreopsis marginans</i> Glossy shield fern
<i>Arthropteris tenella</i> A climbing fern	<i>Lastreopsis microsora</i> Creeping shield fern
<i>Asplenium australasicum</i> Bird's nest fern	<i>Lastreopsis munita</i>
<i>Asplenium polyodon</i> An epiphyte in e.g. bird's nest fern	<i>Microsorium scandens</i> A climbing fern
<i>Christella parasitica</i>	<i>Pellaea nana</i> Dwarf sickle fern
<i>Crepidomanes vitiense</i> a filmy fern on tree trunks	<i>Platycterium bifurcatum</i> Elkhorn fern
<i>Crepidomanes walleri</i> a filmy fern on rock	<i>Platycterium superbum</i> Staghorn fern
<i>Cyathea cooperii</i> Tree fern	<i>Pteris umbrosa</i> Jungle brake
<i>Davallia pyxidata</i> Hare's-foot fern	<i>Pyrrosia confluens</i> Felt fern
<i>Diplazium assimile</i>	



THE KNOLL NATIONAL PARK

Compiled by Irene Cullen

Our outing to the Knoll Nat, Park - Mt Tamborine in June was most enjoyable. The weather was just right for walking, the walking paths were well graded on the mountain slopes and the ferns both plentiful and varied. 39 varieties being recorded.

A fern we don't often see in our walks in S.E.Qld is *Asplenium flabellifolium*. Here it was growing in extremely dense masses. *Cephalomanes caudatum*, also was very dense on the trees it grew on.

The Knoll is often overlooked as a Park to visit on the Mountain, probably because of it's location. But it is well worth a visit, especially by fern enthusiasts. Following is a list of ferns recorded there. *Adiantum atroviride* - *A. diaphanum* - *A. formosum* - *A. hispidulum* - *A. silvaticum* - *Arachniodes aristata* - *Athropteris tenella* - *A. beckleri* - *Asplenium australasicum* - *A. flabellifolium* - *A. polyodon* - *Blechnum cartilagineum* - *Calochlena dubia* - *Cephalomanes cadutaum* - *Christella dentata* - *Cyathea cooperi* - *C. leichardtiana* - *Davallia pyxidata* - *Diplazium assimile* - *Doodia aspera* - *D. caudata* - *D. media* - *Drynaria rigidula* - *Hypolepis glandulifera* - *Lastreopsis margins* - *L. microsora* - *L. silvestris* - *L.smithiana* - *Microsorium scandens* - *Nephrolepis cordifolia* - *Pellaea nana* - *Platycterium bifacatum* - *P. superbum* - *Pteridium esculentum* - *Pteris tremula* - *P.umbrosa* - *Pyrrosia confluens* - *P. rupestris*.

SYDNEY GROUP -REPORT

JULY - Members who went to Wheeny Creek in July found the creek rather high and the surrounds boggy, so they did not venture far from the picnic area, and did not see all the ferns Peter Hind knows are there. What they did see were.

Calochlaena dubia, lots of *Hypolepsis muelleri*, *Doodia aspera*, *Doodia australis* on rocks, *Pelleae falcata*, *Asplenium flabellatum*, *Hymenophyllum cupressiforme*, *Blechnum nudum*, *Sticherus flabellatus*, *Grammitis species (probably stenophylla)*, *Dicksonia antarctica*, and also near the creek *Cyathea cooperi*, which is not native to the area but is apparently naturalising there. Members were also impressed by the quantity of rainforest trees in the area including *Backhousea myrtifolia*, coachwood, red cedar, corkwood and turpentine. Our thanks to Steve Munro who recorded these ferns and trees.



AUGUST MEETING

The discussion on easy to grow ferns gave us quite a long list. We were considering plants in the ground, in the open garden and of course could only speak for our Sydney coastal area. Betty Rymer, our hostess for the day has quite a lot of ground including a valley and a creek. She told us that when they moved in years ago the land was all cleared but over time the ferns have gradually come back: she has done nothing to help: no watering or planting. She has now in the open *Pteris tremula*, *Pteris umbrosa*, *Pelleae nana*, *Adiantum aethiopicum*, *A. hispidulum*, and *A. formosum*, *Calochlaena dubia*, *Doodia caudata*, *D. aspera*, and *D. australis*.

Peter Hind had all of these on his easy to grow list, he also added *Lasteopsis species e.g. munita, acuminata, microsora, decomposita*. Members present agreed these are easy to grow and what lends to their attraction for people with small gardens is that they do not spread rapidly. Then there are also *Polystichum proliferum*, *Asplenium bulbiferum*, and *Asplenium australicum*, *Davallia solida var. pyxidata*, *Christella dentata*, *Diplazium melanochlamys*, *Microsorium scandens*, *M. diversifolium* and *M. howensis*.

No one present disagreed with any of these, and we probably missed some. Of course the list would be much longer if we had considered those growing in baskets, shade houses etc.

FORTH COMING EVENTS - A.S.G.A.P. STH. EAST QLD FERN STUDY GROUP -

Friday September. 7th Set up Fern Display at Annual Flower Show - Mt Gravatt Show Grounds.

Sunday 7th October. Study - Confusing Fern Species. Meet 9.30am at Irene Cullen's home Unit 3. 7 Braddock St. Robertson.

Sunday 4th November - Excursion to Buderim. Meet 9.30a.m. at Northern end (gate) Johnsons Place Sunshine Coast. Access from Buderim - From the round-about where Main Street meets Burnett St., take Lindsay Road and follow it around the top. Take Quiet Valley Cres. (right turn). Follow to the end, there it joins Johnsons Place. Turn left and park. We will meet you at the gate.

Sunday 2nd December - End of Year meeting Meet 9.30a.m at Graham Nosworthy's home - 609 Grandview Road, Pullenvale,. Bring fern for Fern Swap and lots of ideas for next year's programme

PROGRAMME FOR COMING MONTHS - SYDNEY GROUP

September: No meeting; Too many Garden shows etc.

October, Saturday 20TH. Meeting at the home of Fred Johnston, 18 Taylors Road , Dural
Arrive from 11 a.m.

November Saturday 17th. Visit to the Grevillea Park, Bulli. Where a few years ago the Sydney group planted ferns. We will inspect these (and the grevilleas of course).Members who have ferns to spare could bring to plant .this garden is not open very often and this visit is by special permission: an opportunity not to be missed.

December Sunday 2nd, Our Christmas party , Tamara and Ian Cox have again invited us to visit them. Members who intend to be present should notify Tamara a fortnight before hand : also let her know what you bring to contribute to the banquet. Ian and Tamara Cox, 5 Ivy Place, Kenthurst
Phone 96542533

SPORE BANK

ORDERING SPORE

Spore is available free of charge from Barry White, 24 Ruby St. West Essendon. Vic. 3040
When ordering please include a stamped self-addressed envelope.

CURRENT SPORE LIST

Acrostichum speciosum 12/01
Arachniodes aristata 5/00
Asplenium australasicum 5/98
Asplenium milnei 5/00
Blechnum camfieldii 5/00
Blechnum cartilagineum 1/01
Blechnum chambersii 2/99
Blechnum fluviatile 2/00
Blechnum minus 6/99
Blechnum patersonii 8/99
Colysis sayeri 12/00
Cyathea australis 9/00
Cyathea celebica 3/99
Cyathea cooperi 9/00
Cyathea cooperi 'Brentwood'
98
Cyathea cooperi var.
cinnamonia /99
Cyathea leichhardtiana 11/00
Cyathea robusta 2/98
Cyclosorus interruptus 3/99
Cystopteris filix-fragilis /00

Deparia petersenii 6/00
Dicksonia antarctica 9/00
Dicksonia youngiae 1/99
Diplazium australe 6/00
Doodia australis 12/99
Doodia media 3/01
Goniophlebium
subauriculatum 12/00
Hypolepis glandulifera 12/00
Lastreopsis acuminata 3/01
Lastreopsis decomposita 12/00
Lastreopsis hispida 2/00
Lastreopsis microsora 12/00
Lastreopsis rufescens 12/00
Lastreopsis tenera 12/00
Macrothelypteris
polypodioides 4/01
Microlepidia speluncae 5/98
Ophioglossum pendulum 2/00
Platynerium bifurc. cv. Hilo/99
Platynerium bifurc. cv. Hula
Hands /99

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Platynerium bifurc. cv.Roberts
/99
Platynerium bifurc. var.venosa
"Mt.Lewis" /99
Platynerium bifurc.cv
Willinckii Scofield /99
Platynerium hillii /99
Platynerium superbum 11/00
Platynerium superbum
(Cairns) /99
Platynerium veitchii 8/99
Polystichum australiense
12/99
Polystichum formosum 6/99
Pronephrum asperum 3/99
Psilotum nudum 8/99
Pteris comans 10/00
Pteris tremula 2/01
Sticherus flabellatus 8/99
Sticherus urceolatus 3/99
Tectaria Confluens 6/00

Spore Donations – Spore donations are not only welcome, they are essential for the proper functioning of the spore bank. All types of spore are welcome including fresher samples of ones already on the list. There is no necessity to separate the sporangia from the spore. The whole, or part, frond may also be sent in, all is acceptable. Please include date of collection and, if collected in the bush, the area. In the list, the month and year of collection is shown. The letter B indicates collected in the bush. The area of collection is available on request.

CONTRIBUTIONS SOUGHT – Thanks to everyone who sent such a wide variety of articles this quarter. It really makes the newsletter interesting and easier to edit. However, I would still like to appeal to individuals or groups to send articles, questions on their favourite plant, an interesting spot they may have visited, a tip on how to grow, or propagate plants, or something you've discovered about watering, light, mixtures, fertilisers etc. Questions have generated a deal of interest in the past. It is your newsletter, help us make it work better for you. It may be something as simple as an unusual sighting.



Figure 1 Chinese Brake Fern - Pteris Vittata

DEADLINE FOR COPY – Closing date for material to be included in the September, 2001 Newsletter is November 15th, 2001. Your contributions are valuable – whether as a group or individual. I strongly urge groups from the various States to send articles.

If undeliverable return to:
272 Humffray St. Nth.,
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