The Fort Bushland Reserve

February 2008 Notes - by John Lahey

The working bee planned for Sunday 3 February was cancelled because of the rain.

This month I've added the following species to our census of native plants in the Reserve.

Plant	Common Name	Type of Plant
Sarcopetalum harveyanum	Pearl Vine	Vine
Cayratia clematidea	Slender Grape	Vine
Chrysopogon sylvaticus		Grass
Aristida vagans	Threeawn Speargrass	Grass
Enteropogon unispiceus	Windmill Grass	Grass
Dichelachne sp. (Brisbane B.K.Simon 3221)	Brisbane Plumegrass	Grass
Echinopogon nutans var. nutans	Nodding Hedgehog grass	Grass
Paspalidium distans		Grass
Bothriochloa decipiens var. decipiens		Grass
Sporobolus creber		Grass
Eragrostis sororia	Lovegrass	Grass
Urochloa foliosa	Leafy Panic	Grass
Cryptocarya triplinervis var. pubens	Hairy three-veined Cryptocarya	Tree
Einadia trigonos subsp. stellulata	Fishweed	Herb
Chenopodium carinatum	Keeled Goosefoot, Green Crumbweed	Herb
Oplismenus aemulus	Beard Grass	Grass
Eremochloa bimaculata	*Poverty Grass*	*Grass*

I removed *Cryptocarya microneura* from the list.

Currently there are 230 native plants recorded as growing in the Reserve although a few of these may have been incorrectly identified or may no longer exist here.

I've covered some of these additional species in this newsletter and will try to cover the others over the next few months.

Sarcopetalum harveyanum (Pearl Vine)

In my January 2007 Notes I incorrectly identified this vine as *Tinospora smilacina*. The leaves are thicker and more leathery than *T. smilacina* and are slightly peltate (the leaf stalk joins the leaf slightly in from the edge of the leaf). The plants are dioecious and the small racemes of flowers arise from the stem just below a leaf. The fruit are red and about 5 to 8 mm in diameter.

Eudocima fullonia (Fruit Piercing Moth)

I found a couple of these loopy-loop caterpillars busily devouring the leaves of the Sarcopetalum harveyanum. The moth of this species is an agricultural pest. It uses its strong proboscis to pierce the skin of fruit at night to suck the fruit juices. The hole that is left in the fruit allows fungi and bacteria to enter, causing the fruit to rot prematurely. I also found these caterpillars on the *Echinostephia aculeata* (Prickly Snake Vine).

Tinospora smilacina (Snake Vine)

Snake vine is a woody deciduous vine which climbs using twining stems. The heart shaped leaves are glossy dark green and rather thin in texture. The stems have characteristic corky white lenticils. It produces racemes of green flowers in spring and early summer, followed by red berries in Autumn.

Cayratia clematidea (Slender Grape)

This is a weak climber with branching tendrils. It develops an underground tuber from which new growths emerge each year. It produces panicles of small green flowers followed by bunches of small black berries.

Chrysopogon sylvaticus

This densely tufted perennial grass grows to about 1.5 metres with large arching flower-heads of a rusty-golden colour. It is growing in the south-west corner of the Reserve as well as in the open Eucalypt forest. When not in flower it can be distinguished from Cymbopogon refractus by the yellow-green leaf colour and the slightly broader leaves.

Cymbopogon refractus (Barbed-wire grass)

This grass was already on our native list but I've included it here because it is also a densely tufted perennial grass which could be confused with Chrysopogon sylvaticus when not in flower. The leaves are narrower than the above species and a distinctly blue-green colour. It grows in the same areas of the reserve. The seed heads look like barbed wire hence the common name.

Enteropogon unispiceus (Windmill Grass)

This is another densely tufted perennial grass that is much finer than the earlier species. It is widespread in the Reserve and the flowering stems can have 1, 2, 3 or 4 branches although the 2 branched stem as shown here seems to be most common.

Eremochloa bimaculata (Poverty Grass)

This is another tufted perennial grass with a tough rootstock. It grows along the east coast of Queensland and northern NSW. I found it growing in the open forest towards the northern end of the reserve.

Mischocarpus pyriformis
(Yellow Pear-fruit)

There are several mature *Mischocarpus pyriformis* trees growing in the reserve and a large number of small trees and saplings. The older trees have obviously flowered and fruited well in the past and the seeds have been well dispersed, presumably by birds. The trees have large compound dark glossy green leaves with from 4 to 9 leaflets. The small creamy white flowers are followed by yellow/orange pear shaped fruit.

Correction

Cryptocarya triplinervis var. pubens (Hairy three-veined Cryptocarya)

When this tree flowered in October last year I took a specimen to the Queensland Herbarium to have it identified, where it was identified as *Cryptocarya microneura*. The tree is now covered in fruit so I took another specimen to the herbarium to have its identity checked as the shape of the fruit seemed inconsistent with *C. microneura*. The identity of the tree has now been confirmed as *Cryptocarya triplinervis var. pubens.* This exercise shows just how difficult it is to identify some of the rainforest trees without having all the features such as leaves, flowers, fruit, etc. I've deleted *C. microneura* from our census and added *C. triplinervis var. pubens.* Refer to October 2007 Notes for a photo of the flowers.

Aphananthe philippinensis (Rough-leaved Elm, Grey Handlewood, Native Elm)

While this grows into a medium sized tree, most of the specimens in the reserve are relatively young. The small cream/green flowers are followed by greenish yellow fruit that turn black when ripe. The ripe fruit are edible and are reported to taste like stewed apples.

Breynia oblongifolia (Coffee Bush, Dwarf's Apple)

This small shrub grows to about 3 metres and is relatively uncommon in the reserve. It is a pioneer species and is starting to appear in some of the cleared areas. This plant is monoecious with separate male and female flowers on the same plant. The photo to the right is of a female flower and the photo above left shows the flowers at each leaf axil. The bright red fruit turn black when ripe.

Gossia hillii (Scaly Myrtle)

These trees flowered in October last year (see October 2007 Notes) and are now covered in masses of green fruit that turn a glossy black when ripe. The fruit are edible but have a fairly insipid taste.

Papilio aegeus (Orchard Swallowtail Butterfly)

You've probably seen the beautiful large Orchard Swallowtail butterflies flitting through the reserve. Their native host plants include *Flindersia* species and *Citrus australis* but are most frequently seen on garden Citrus trees. This young caterpillar has put out its two red "horns" in a defensive display.

It's amazing that this moss can survive the drought so well on an exposed tree trunk and then spring into life with a bit of rain.

This showy toadstool emerged after the recent rains.

Errata

In last month's Notes I referred to a photo of flowers of *Everistia vaccinifolia var.nervosa* in the February 2006 Notes. That should be the February 2007 Notes.

The next working bee will be held on Sunday 2 March at 8 am.