

December 2003 - January 2004

GLORIOUS SUNSHINE FOR OUR AGM & TREEPLANT ON THE OBI

We picked a fantastic day for the 2003 Barung Annual General Meeting, held Saturday 11th October on the Obi Creek in Ruddle Drive, Maleny. This AGM treeplant saw another 800 trees, shrubs and grasses in the ground for the benefit of the whole Lake Baroon catchment.

Thanks to the efforts of more than 50 treeplanters, these were planted, mulched and watered in time for a gourmet BBQ lunch.

This treeplant celebrated the end of Barung's Natural Heritage Trust funded on-ground "Barung Landcare Revegetation / Remnant Protection in the Upper Mary Catchment" and the "Corridors of Green" projects, which have changed both the face of the area and local landholder attitudes towards land restoration over the past six years.

As well as encouraging restoration of native vegetation on many 'unseen' sites, these projects played a large part in the revegetation of the Maleny Entrance site (along the Landsborough Maleny Road under the High School) and the Obi Obi Boardwalk.

Most treeplanters stayed after lunch for the 2003 Barung Landcare Annual General Meeting.

All outgoing 2002/2003 Management Committee members were thanked for their tireless contributions to Barung during the past year. Retiring Committee members Elaine Green (President), Karen Shaw (Vice President), Tracy Adams, Richard Francis, Penny Riddoch and Jo Todd each received a small gift in appreciation of their efforts.

Barung staff would like to welcome the 2003/2004 Management Committee: Lin Fairlie (President), Heather Spring (Vice President), Trish Brunton (Treasurer), Kate Fraser (Secretary), and Committee members James Davidson, Guy Morgan, Raylee Myers, Helen Rosenbaum, Robert Scopes and Clay Stokoe.

The Management Committee plays an enormous role in sustaining the health, ethics and finances of Barung.



Other AGM highlights included the presentation of the 2002/03 Barung Land Restoration Award which was shared by Irene Keton, Maleny and Elizabeth Verreyt, Flaxton. Apart from extensive revegetation on her Maleny property, Irene is the first Caloundra City hinterland landholder to attain a Voluntary Conservation Agreement and has been instrumental in the formation and ongoing success of the Tamarind Street revegetation group who work to repair the headwaters of their Bridge Creek tributary. Elizabeth has not only completely revegetated her own block, but is now starting on the adjacent block which she purchased for that purpose - not bad when you're in your 70's!

Marek and Libby Malter were awarded the 2002/03 Phil Jacobs Farm Forestry Award. Marek and Libby have instigated a large farm forestry planting on their Bridge Creek Rd property to complement the remnant vegetation enhancement work they are doing for biodiversity.

The 2002 / 03 Volunteer of the Year Award went to Green Reserve, Max Smith, whose generosity in time and effort is far and above the call of duty.

The "Bush Track" raffle, generously donated by local artist, Shane Watson was won by Bruce Wilson of Maleny.

cont'd Page 3



Above - Max Smith, 2002/03 Volunteer of the Year
Right - Marc presents Irene Keton with her Land Restoration Award in recognition of her fantastic on-ground efforts

Below - Elaine congratulates "Bush Track" winner, Bruce Wilson



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WELCOME TO NEW MEMBERS

Steph Todd	Sarah Wyhoon
Guy Morgan	Peter Pike
Christopher & Wendy Ward	D & J Courtney
Pauline Moore	Kelly Besford
Barry Traill	John Parker
David Grady	Ed & Karen Lawler
John Ford	Dorothy Gordon
Faye Henderson	Paul Lamb
Rachael Stacy	Marcia Deakin
K & A Nielsen	Trevor Stillman
Hanicek Schoenberger	Jill Burke
Anne O'Rourke	Jude Sattler
Suzanne White	Marie Conway
Kaz Cooke	Rachael Huddleston
Ray & Karen Elleemor	John & Dorothy Duckworth
Cali Salzmann	Antun & Etelka Rozumberski
Dale & Jodie Diefenbach	John & Deirdre Shaw
Bruce Bradley	Jim Seagroatt

WELCOME BACK

D & A Mckenzie	Joan Benson
P & L Frawley	Evan Parry

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LANDCARE SUPPORT

FROM OUR NEW PRESIDENT

Lin Fairlie



The new Barung Management Committee is looking forward to the challenging year that lies ahead. While this new committee has a broad range of skills, we are sure that there are many members reading this who could complement these abilities. We just need to know what skills you can offer.

Member involvement can be as much or as little as you wish.

Barung's key Sub-committees are (not in any order): Nursery; Funding; Strategic Directions; Wood Expo; Contracting Working Group; Revegetation and Habitat; Education; Farmcare and Farm Forestry. While many Sub-committees overlap to some degree, each has a specific focus, so if your interest and /or expertise suggests you could contribute, please do not hesitate to contact Mim (Barung's Coordinator), myself or any other member of the Management Committee.

Current local issues have occupied a certain amount of time for some of us - especially the Golf Course/Community Precinct and the Boxsell's site development. If you did not see the Barung letter to the Range News about the latter, it is included on page 3 of this newsletter to clarify Barung's position for all members.

The Master Plan for the Community Precinct, drawn up by members of the Taskforce appointed by Caloundra City Council for this purpose, is currently being checked by Caloundra City Council staff for initial compliance before being presented to the Maleny community and the whole of Council.

Barung has been 'given'/assigned land within the Precinct but we do not necessarily have to go there. It is important that WE decide our future location following the end of our 'Licence to Occupy' the current Bicentenary Lane site in 2007.

Barung's presence on the Taskforce has contributed to ensuring more vegetated linkages between housing areas, two quite large areas which could be developed as a native botanical gardens as well as recognition of the need to revegetate the steep drainage lines running through the property from North Maleny Rd to Obi Obi Creek. An average 40m wide riparian zone is also integral to the plan.

There is still no National Action Plan for Salinity and Water Quality (NAP) or Natural Heritage Trust (NHT) funding coming onto the ground through the Regional Bodies in South East Queensland or the Burnett Mary. Nor, at the time of writing, has there been any sign of the Landcare funding announced by the Federal Environment Minister about three months ago. The next round of Envirofund applications has just been announced and is due at end of January. In light of this lack of funding, it is even more important that Barung continues to strive towards financial self-sufficiency - no mean feat considering the increasing demands for information and assistance from the community.

This area of SEQ continues to attract many new landholders. As Barung members you can all help our aim of sustainability in land management by telling your new (and old) neighbours about Barung. The need to reach new landholders is increasingly important. The second edition of the Blackall Range Landholders Guide will be available early in the 2004.

We send you all sincere seasons greetings and hope that landcare, with your assistance, goes from strength to strength in 2004.

FROM OUR PAST PRESIDENT Farewell the Year of Fresh Water and Farewell from me

Elaine Green

I have always had a particular interest in waterways, ever since mucking around in the creek as a kid. The receiving capacity of our waterways for pollution has been almost continuously exploited since first settlement and today they provide an index of environmental health that is a fairly poor record overall.

From a historical point of view the waterways were our first arteries for exploration and subsequently for transport. They defined the hubs from which towns have grown. From an environmental point of view their banks were the first places exploited for their timber and denuded in the service of human activities. From a social point of view, waterways and catchments are the cement that binds people of a region together. For native birds and animals, creek corridors are often the last stand for the natural habitat that is critical to their survival.

I remember the excitement of finding large stands of an endangered species of flora on the banks of the South Maroochy River around 1993. Isolated pockets of native vegetation along creeks can literally contain the seeds of the future viability of their species in a local area.

For several years Barung's major on-ground focus has been on riparian revegetation. This has made a significant contribution to improving the water quality in creeks and streams all over the Blackall Range with community tree plants and Green Corps projects. Such works look set to continue with another major revegetation project (hopefully) on Obi Obi Creek for 2004.

Nobody today could question that clean water is essential for life and that we must restore the damage we have done to our waterways and catchments over two hundred years to ensure a quality of life for future generations.

Here on the Range we stand at the headwaters of four major rivers: the Mary, the Maroochy, the Mooloolah and the Stanley. Our actions certainly impact on many people in many downstream catchments, as well as on water supplies for the Sunshine Coast and Brisbane. What you do in your little gully also matters as all streams eventually lead to these four rivers. Many environmental weeds are spread by overland and gully runoff and probably the single best thing you can do to improve water quality is to stop sediment washing into the waterway by replanting steep areas and creek banks with native vegetation.

I have great hopes that we will soon become an enlightened planet and that full recognition will be given to the importance of such on-ground work. Imagine if Landcare groups could be paid for the ecosystem services provided by way of water quality improvement and carbon sequestration in tree plantings. It seems that all levels of Government are just beginning to realise the true value of clean water, and that market based mechanisms for ecosystem support and environmental flows will become reality in the not too distant future. About time, you may well say.

As I am retiring from the Management Committee after four years, this is then farewell from me. I have enjoyed working with Barung and thank all the dedicated staff and volunteers for the great work that makes Barung such a successful organisation. Fortunately for me, I am working with the Healthy Waterways Partnership and extending the love affair with waterways to a South East Queensland regional focus.

As a friend's email signature says - Politicians come and go, but rivers go on forever.

Letter to the Editor, The Range News

published 27th November 2004

This letter is to clarify Barung Landcare's position regarding the Cornerstone development on the Boxsells land following an unexpected visit from representatives of Cornerstone, Woolworths and their landscape consultant on 13 November 2003.

The Barung Management Committee is opposed to large scale development so close to Obi Creek, including, in this case, the destruction of the mature vegetation and wildlife habitat. However, it appears that the development MAY go ahead with the subsequent destruction of much, if not all, of the existing vegetation and the habitat it creates.

Barung Landcare's mission is to restore and repair our local natural environment and to increase the community's ability to do the same.

In light of this, if community protests are overruled and this development proceeds, it should not be surprising to the community that Barung is prepared to advise the Cornerstone landscape consultant on suitable species and methodology for the restoration of the riparian zone, in an attempt to salvage some species and habitat connectivity along Obi Obi Creek.

This is NOT to be seen in any way as support for the development.

Lin Fairlie

President, Barung Landcare Ass. Inc.

the
W O O T H A
P R I Z E
2004

first prize

\$1500 + \$500 sustainably harvested cabinet timbers

second prize

\$750 + \$250 sustainably harvested cabinet timbers

third prize

\$500 + \$250 sustainably harvested cabinet timbers

works to be exhibited at
from Chainsaw to Fine Furniture™
Maleny Wood Expo 2004
1, 2, 3 May 2004 in Maleny

applications close early 2004
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application form available on the Barung website
www.barunglandcare.com.au

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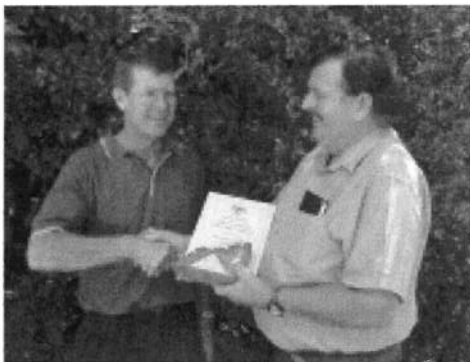
visit barunglandcare.com.au
to download your Application Form or ring the office

Bruce fell in love with this wonderful oil painting when he sold tickets in the raffle at the 2003 Maleny Wood Expo, so he was absolutely thrilled to take it home to hang on his wall.

Many thanks to Blue Vine Catering, Montville Mist and Hire A Loo, and our volunteers for their support of the treeplant and the Barung AGM.

Thank you especially to Lake Baroon Catchment Care Group and Caloundra City Council for assisting with funding for the treeplant, and to Marc Russell, Nick Willis, Cali Salzmann, Angie Todd and Clay Stokoe for ensuring that everything ran so smoothly on the day.

Ashley Sewell congratulates Marek Malter, who with wife Libby won the 2002/03 Phil Jacobs Farm Forestry Award



Caring for your on-site wastewater facility for a healthier environment

Householders with on-site wastewater facilities are being encouraged to ensure they carry out regular maintenance on their systems to minimise environmental harm and protect public health.

A pamphlet prepared by Caloundra City Council on how to manage your septic system has been inserted in this newsletter.

Caloundra City Council recently undertook a survey of residents in Lake Baroon Catchment to assess on-site wastewater facilities, including septic systems, household sewage treatment plants (HSTPs), composting toilets and holding tanks.

In addition to the survey an assessment program is being undertaken to assess a number of on-site wastewater facilities, to gain information on how they are functioning.

The information obtained is to be used in preparing a strategy for Council for managing on-site wastewater facilities within Caloundra City.

NEW PUBLICATIONS TO BORROW FROM THE BARUNG RESOURCE LIBRARY

- [Queensland Herbarium Achievements 2001-02](#)
- [Environment Protection Agency](#)
- [Protecting Natural Heritage](#) Dept Environment & Heritage
- [Land & Water Australia Annual Report 02-03](#)
- [Pesticide Application Manual](#) DPI
- [NHT- Barung Revegetation Remnant Protection in Upper Mary Catchment Stage 2 -Final Report](#)

NEW REFERENCE BOOKS

- [Bushland Weeds](#) Kate Brown & Kris Brooks
- [Pests, Diseases & Disorders of Garden Plants](#) S. Buczacki & K. Harris
- [Tree Hollows & Wildlife Conservation in Australia](#) P. Gibbons & D. Lindenmayer
- [The Genera of Australian Lichens](#) Roderick W. Rogers

Having recently mulched another patch of grass in front of the house, I heartily applauded Spencer Shaw's piece in the October-November newsletter.

Oplismenus and *Ottocloa* are indeed wonderful ground covers, especially under trees. I find they tend to scramble over low multistemmed shrubs but have provided excellent protection for a shaded, steep slope on the edge of the garden. I also wouldn't be without *Viola hederacea* which does stay on the ground, or my drifts of native bluebells, *Wahlenbergia*, spreading happily through the mulch.

These two provided me with colour during the transition from the massed floral display of the early spring garden to the more subtle tones of later flowering shrubs. *Backhousia myrtifolia* came into full fluffy flower during late October/early November and will hold its cream coloured bracts for some time. *Archirhodomyrtus beckleri*, a long name for what is so far a small shrub has been producing dainty pink or white flowers which will be followed by pale orange fruit. *Syzygiums* and *acmenas* have also been late spring flowerers and will hold their brightly coloured fruit into the summer. I'm sure we're all familiar with the range of colours in the new growth of these two genera.

It's been the time of year for the *Lomandras* to flower and perfume the side of the drive, the creek and parts of the garden. They are combined with *Crinum* lilies for the complementary leaf shape and the contrast of the bright white lily flowers. *Lomandra confertifolia* is a great little clumping plant for semi-shaded areas. It's much smaller than its more common cousins, is bright green and has finer foliage.

I was glad I'd taken the trouble to prune off the old canes of the Native ginger, *Alpinia caerulea*, once the fruit had matured, as they're now flowering on the fresh new canes without an untidy underlay of old dead leaves. I avoid excessive "tidying" but judicious pruning does improve the following season's growth and flowers. These gingers are planted along the top edge of a dry gully, are never watered, but are well shaded. They certainly help to hold the soil together as the underground rhizomes spread.

Late spring and early summer are the times to appreciate all the colours of new leaf growth. *Callistemon salignus* is sporting bright pink shoots, there are many shades of bronze and *Callistemon* "Rocky Rambler" is covered in soft mauve new growth. The latter is from the Blackdown Tablelands west of Rockhampton but I grow it primarily for its leaf colour and its year round scattering of blooms which are the mainstay of the honeyeaters. The older leaves are deceptively prickly so wear gloves if you need to prune or spot weed near it.

As the fruit bearing trees and shrubs come into season, you'll notice an increase in the number of fruit eating birds visiting the garden. We're delighting in a pair of very pretty Rose-crowned fruit doves which we watch while enjoying our own breakfast out on the back deck.

On a final note, I was impressed by the way the garden coped with those cricket ball sized hailstones we experienced recently. A few twigs were sliced off the *Ficus virens* but the fine foliage of the local shrubs coped admirably, much better than the large rhubarb leaves in the vegetable patch!

NEEDED IN THE NURSERY
 * FOAM BOXES
 * UMBRELLAS!!

NURSERY NOTES

Nick Willis

G'day Folks.

My recent absence from the nursery (for good or for worse) was a response to the insatiable call of the wilderness that we all feel at some time. A two week hiking holiday in beautiful Tasmania was a real eye opener for me to say the least. To see the extreme opposing forces at play in the environmental sphere of our island state was quite incredible. On one hand we have the powerful woodchip and logging industries wreaking destruction, but behind the scenes is an equally dedicated number of grassroots environmental organisations such as Landcare.

Everywhere that I travelled the Landcare presence could be seen in tree plantings and weed control. It was interesting to note the limited range of species grown and used, and the environmental conditions with which the plants have to deal, such as slow growth due to extreme cold, severe frosts and wildlife grazing. It made me appreciate how lucky we are with our local conditions - with the exception of weed growth.

A huge thanks go to Cali and her volunteers for keeping the nursery in good order during my absence.

With Christmas upon us again, I would like to remind our members that we have Barung Gift Vouchers available that can be redeemed for either plants, books or memberships. The Barung Bookshop now carries a good range of titles covering many aspects of our natural environment. And what better gift for your loved ones than a box of trees to plant, so that they can spend the Christmas break working even harder than usual!

The Nursery also has a heap of Hoop pines in 8" pots suitable for smaller living Christmas trees.

The next big event on the Barung calendar is of course the 2004 Maleny Wood Expo, *From Chainsaw to Fine Furniture*™ in May. As I mentioned in the last Newsletter, we are starting a separate working group to coordinate the Barung Nursery tent. Absolutely anyone with any creative ideas or improvements from previous Expos, please let us know so that we can make this one the best yet. We are particularly keen to hear from anyone who has experience in retail displays or similar who would like to help coordinate and plan for the event. We need to start now as it will take time to grow plants for displays and to sell.

Another huge thank you goes out to all those people who continue to bring in seed for us. I know I say it every time but it can't be said enough: we can only grow those plants for which we can get seed! If you see seed, no matter how common, contact us to see if we need it. Too often people ignore a species fruiting on their property because they assume we already have enough.

Thank you also to everyone who has purchased a Richmond Birdwing Butterfly vine over the last few months. The demand has been amazing - so much so that we have run out of mature vines. We currently have about 2,000 seedlings that will be ready in 12 months time, so if you missed out this time then be sure to keep asking us.

Thank you to the following Oct/Nov seed donors:

Dennis Woods Rita Beenders
Greg Smyrrel Bernie Keays
John Heggerty Elizabeth Verreyt
John Martinkovic Clay Stokoe
John & Valerie Poulsen
Green Reserve with Marc Russell & Steve Forshaw

PLANT PROFILE

Nick Willis

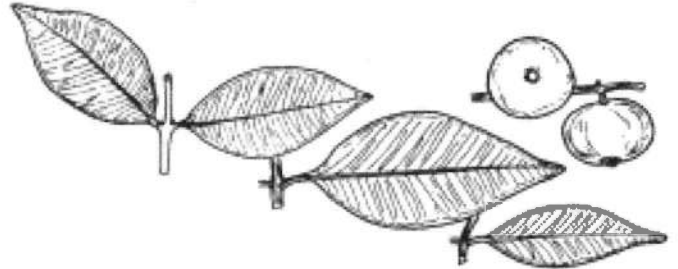
Giant Water Gum

Syzygium francisii

Family: *Myrtaceae*

Giant water gum is a large tree found naturally along moist water courses from mid NSW to Gladstone in Queensland. I know that I always say this, but the Giant water gum really is one of my favourite rainforest trees.

Growing to a height of 35m or more, it truly is one of the granddaddies of Lilly Pillies. That's right folks - these majestic forest giants are related to everybody's favourite garden shrub used for screening out those unsightly neighbours.



The botanical name *Syzygium francisii* is derived from the Greek word 'syzygos' meaning joined or yoked together, referring to the paired leaves arranged directly opposite on the stems, a characteristic of all *Syzygium*s. The species name 'francisii' is in honour of W.D Francis, Queensland government botanist and authority on Australian rainforests who lived early last century.

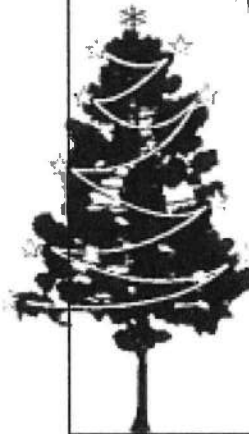
Being a Lilly pilly, Giant water gums have the characteristic pink new growth and white flowers followed by purplish/blue berries in mid summer. But to my eye, the real beauty of Francis' water gum lies in the bark of a mature specimen. The huge buttressed trunks of this tree are covered by patchy red/brown bark that just cries out to be touched. This, combined with a rather attractively shaped and well-proportioned tree, make them highly suitable as feature trees for larger back yards or even as indoor pot plants, as well as a must for any creek-bank revegetation job.

**Giant water gum is on special now at Barung Nursery
for the discounted rate of \$1.50/tube**

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to their grandchildren...
& to the planet



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*Available for
Christmas*



LOCAL WILD & EDIBLE Bernard Murowski

Scurvy weed (*Commelina cyanea*)

Scurvy weed (*Commelina cyanea*) was used by the early European settlers as an emergency vegetable to supplement rations so they would not contract scurvy, thus the common name given to the plant. The botanical name *Commelina* is named after J. and G. Commelin, 17th century botanists, and *cyanea* is from the Greek *cyanos*, 'blue', which refers to its cobalt blue flowers. The plant occurs naturally along the coast from southern NSW to north Queensland and the NT.

Scurvy weed is very similar in appearance to Wandering Jew (*Tradescantia albiflora*), which tends to inhabit similar sites, though Scurvy weed has vivid blue flowers rather than white.

In its natural habitat it tends to prefer a moister environment, such as on the edge of rainforests, and will even grow in water. It can become a weed in some situations but if it has many competitors, as it does in its natural environment, it should stay under control.

It is wonderful as a groundcover and in hanging baskets where its lovely blue flowers can be better appreciated. Though the plant prefers a protected environment it can grow in full sun, however it will die back if it dries out too much.

In SE Queensland Scurvy weed tends to grow vigorously in the warmer months and may die back in the drier and cooler months of winter. It copes well with coastal environments (second line coastal), even inundation by saltwater. It can also be sensitive to frosts. The plant is easily propagated from cuttings, which strike easily, or from its seeds. Suitable soils would be heavy and clay soils, loams, and sand - in which it can act as a binder.

No wonder scurvy weed was only used as an emergency ration because it does not have any really identifying taste and is rather bland, with a lettuce like flavour. This could be an asset if you do not want to overpower another ingredient that has a subtle flavour.

As a vegetable the plant can be boiled or steamed and served with butter, salt, and freshly cracked pepper. It would also be suitable for inclusion in stir-fries, quiches or pies, or served fresh in salads.

Illustration from *Australian Rainforest Plants V*, by Nan & Hugh Nicholson, published by Terania Rainforest Publishing.



BUTTERFLIES OF THE RANGE Bob Miller

Butterfly migration

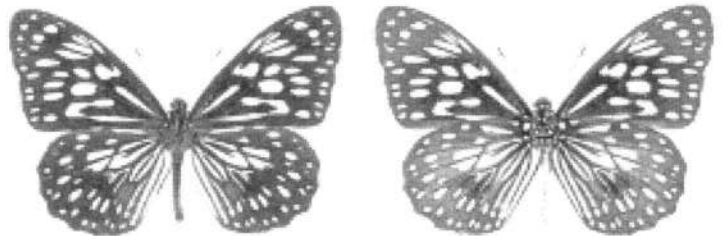
This time of the year is the most appropriate to mention the little known phenomenon of butterfly migration because it is happening right now.

When we talk about butterfly migration, we immediately think about the mass migrations of the Wanderer butterfly (*Danaus plexippus*) in North America. Over there, the Wanderer butterfly flies south in autumn to congregate in their millions between the north of San Francisco and Los Angeles, in the moist groves of Monterey pines and Eucalypt trees. It has been estimated that between 10,000,000 and 100,000,000 butterflies congregate within a few hectares!

We don't have mass congregations of butterflies in Australia like those in America, but we do get congregations numbering a couple of thousand individuals at times. It is quite a sight to walk into an area protected from wind and see every tree adorned with butterflies like decorations on a Christmas tree.

One of the butterflies currently migrating is the Blue tiger (*Tirumala hamata*). This is a fairly large butterfly, about the same size as the Wanderer, but its wings are black with numerous blue spots on both the upper and undersides of its wings.

I have seen migrations of Blue tiger so large that the sides of the road, from Landsborough to the Maleny end of the Ice-box, was littered with the bodies of butterflies about fifty millimetres deep, struck by vehicles.



Blue tiger (*Tirumala hamata*)

Another butterfly presently migrating is the Capewhite (*Belenois java teutonia*). This butterfly has a wingspan of approximately 55mm. It is fairly variable in colour between males and females and has light and dark forms. Generally, however, it is a white butterfly with a black outer edge containing white spots or, as is the case with most females, a combination of colours from white to apricot - even pink at times.

An earlier butterfly migration occurred in July / August, that of the Lemon migrant (*Catopsilia pomona*). It has a wingspan of about 58mm and, as the name suggests is a bright lemon-yellow colour with or without a black border.

I received a phone call from a friend in Cairns just before this migration occurred. He had just returned from an excursion into the rainforest up there and described how one particular area was yellow, everywhere he looked. Even the fence wires had lines of Lemon migrants on them.

In Australia we have a couple of other migratory butterflies, but those mentioned above are generally the ones most noticed.


For further reading on this fascinating event, I would recommend *Butterflies of Australia* by Common and Waterhouse, 1981.

Illustration from *Butterflies of Australia*, by Michael F. Braby, published by CSIRO Publishing.

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COLOUR IN THE RANGE

ABOUT THAT FAUNA ...

Barung Boobooks

Stacey Franks

The big old Black wattle (*Acacia auriculiformis*) at the back of Barung is not looking too healthy. As this tree has a Kookaburra nest box in it, Nick asked us to move the box so that the tree could be removed.

We have looked in the box several times over the past couple of years. There has been evidence of Kookaburra (*Dacelo novaeguineae*) nesting as well as evidence of something else using the box. We were not sure what it was, but there was the odd stick and a few leaves inside the box.

As Nick had observed the Mickey birds (*Manorina melanocephala*) being very noisy around this particular box, Alan put the ladder up and proceeded to look inside. He was certainly not prepared for what he found. Having been attacked recently by a mother Kookaburra he looked inside cautiously, only to be attacked by a very protective mother Boobook owl (*Ninox boobook*). She flew at Alan, ruffling feathers, thrusting her chest out and baring talons, but luckily for him this was all show and she decided that he was too big to take on and retreated to an adjacent tree.



Photo Alan Franks

Newly hatched chicks early November

In the box Alan found two newly hatched Boobook chicks. They were not more than a few days old, still with their eyes closed and quite helpless.

But the action did not end there. When local Kookaburras saw that the Boobook had left the box, they tried to claim it back. Competition for hollows is now quite common, especially as we have managed to clear much of the habitat and removed all our old growth forests. It takes over 100 years for a tree to develop hollows big enough for Boobook owls and these are the smallest of our owls.

The Boobook owl is common across Australia. It is recognised by its two syllable call of "boobook".

A Boobook owl pair has territory of about 10 hectares with several roost sites, usually in thick tree foliage. Hollows are only used during the breeding season.

The male prepares the nest chamber by placing a bed of sticks, woodchips and leaves

on the floor. Two to four plain white eggs, 10-45 x 35mm diameter, are laid at two/three night intervals. Incubation starts with the first egg and hatching begins after 26-33 days. The female incubates the eggs while the male brings food, usually small mammals such as the house mouse (*Mus musculus*). Boobooks eat more invertebrates than our larger owls.

The young fledge (leave the nest) at about six weeks of age, but continue to be fed by the parents and sometimes other adult helpers for a further few weeks.

Ref: Complete Book of Australian Birds Schodde, R. & Tidemann, S. (eds) 1997, The Reader's Digest, Reader's Digest, Sydney.



Photo Alan Franks

Looking quite cheeky by last week

IUCN's

2003 Threatened Species Red List

illustrates frightening global declines

Release of the 2003 Red List from the International Union for the Conservation of Nature (IUCN) again highlights the increasing number of species under threat of extinction. The number of animals and plants listed as Critically Endangered, Endangered or Vulnerable by global experts has again increased and now exceeds 12,000 species.

"The urgent need to address this problem cannot be overstated," says Averil Bones, HSI's Wildlife Campaigner. "Once a species is lost, it is irretrievable. There is little doubt we are on the brink of losing vast numbers of species, even those that are yet to be described by science."

The Australian Terrestrial Biodiversity Audit released in April 2003 identified almost 3000 ecological communities as under threat of extinction. These are vital habitats that must be protected in order to ensure that our plants, mammals, birds, reptiles, amphibians and insects survive.

Australia has one of the longest lists of extinct endemic mammals in the world. Creatures such as the Eastern Bettong (mainland), Burrowing Bettong (inland), Brush-tailed Bettong, White-footed Rabbit-rat, Banded Hare-wallaby, Darling Down Hopping-mouse, Lord Howe Long-eared Bat, Broad-faced Potoroo, Gould's Mouse, and the famous Thylacine have been lost to threats such as widespread loss of habitat. Another 85 Australian mammal species have declined to meet official threatened species status, with grave concerns for their futures.

The overview of Australia's threatened bird species is not much brighter, with 23 species already extinct and 99 Federally listed as threatened. The Action Plan for Australian Birds identifies many more birds whose survival is precarious.

"Efforts to identify and protect both Australian and international biodiversity hotspots, to develop a National Biodiversity Action Plan, to address the threat of broad-scale land-clearing, and to manage the impacts of climate change on native wildlife are commendable, but must have quickest possible on-ground results. In planning towards the recovery of our threatened species, we must be thorough and effective if we are to avoid further extinctions in the near future," says Ms Bones.

In the immediate future, HSI hopes that Federal Cabinet will agree to end broad-scale land-clearing in Queensland which continues to contribute to loss of global biodiversity. For more information, ring Averil Bones on 02 9973 1728.

From HUMANE SOCIETY INTERNATIONAL - 19/11/03

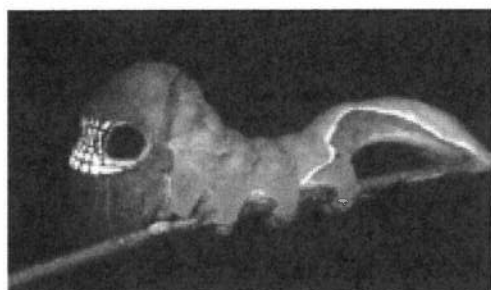
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Mary Cairncross home to rare pink-winged moth

Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve is home to the rare Southern Pink Underwing Moth (*Phyllodes imperialis*) - one of only five places Australia-wide the moth is found and the only place where it is known to breed.

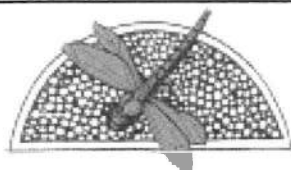
Barung staff have been invited to work with Caloundra City Council and state and federal representatives from CSIRO, Queensland Parks and Wildlife Service, New South Wales Parks and Wildlife Service, Australian Museum (Sydney) and Environment Australia to initiate further research and proactive conservation of the endangered moth. Conservation initiatives to date have been hampered by lack of information regarding the moth's biology and habitat requirements.

The Recovery Team will be headed by CSIRO fellow and leading entomologist, Dr Don Sands, well known to participants at past Barung butterfly workshops.



Larvae of Southern pink underwing moth (*Phyllodes imperialatus*), photographed at MCSR by Bob Miller

Barung is looking to purchase a late model 4WD dual cab ute for Nursery / Reveg. Please let us know if you have any contacts to help us get a good deal for landcare. RING 5494 3151 OR DROP IN.



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Bottled at the Source

Leaping frogs

Living with Threatened Species in the Kenilworth - Belli Area Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee

The Mary River Catchment Coordinating Committee "Living with Threatened Species in the Kenilworth - Belli Area" project is now in full swing after the recent rain. All those boy frogs just can't help themselves as they gear up to make the best use of the warming conditions; putting on their best singing voices be they husky or chirpy. Many people don't realise that only the male frogs call for a mate. The females are silent. Males can also be recognised by a small area of raised and pigmented tissue on the underside of their thumb known as the nuptial pad. This pad helps them to clasp the female in her armpit area so that he can be in the right position to spread his sperm over the eggs as soon as they are laid. Amplexus is the term used for the positioning of the male on the female's back (see photo) prior to and during egg laying and fertilization.

When surveying areas for frogs we go out at night, starting at dusk. During and after rain is best for most frog species. Frogs can be located by searching for 'red eye' with a headlamp. This is the same reflection of light on the retina of the eye that we get in photos where flash is used. With the light source positioned close to our own eye the 'red eye' is bounced back to the torch and we can see it. If you hold your torch low at waist level you will not see the 'red eye'. We also use frog calls to locate and identify frogs as each species has a distinct call.

An entertaining (if you are that way inclined!) and informative reference of frog calls for our area is the CD 'Australian Frog Calls - Subtropical East' by David Stewart. It is best, initially, to record frog calls on a tape as it can be very hard to remember them when you start playing the CD and the mind swims with possibilities.

Recent frog surveys in the Kenilworth-Belli area have found the Giant barred frog *Mixophyes iteratus* (endangered) and the Cascade treefrog *Litoria pearsoniana* (vulnerable) at some sites along Belli and Cedar Creeks where they haven't been recorded before, and at known sites that have not been surveyed for a few years. Many other more common species have also been recorded.

At the end of the survey period (about April 2004) some sites will be selected for longer term monitoring as all frogs face an uncertain future due to environmental changes and attack from the introduced Chytrid (pronounced kit-rid) fungus.

If anyone is interested in joining us on evening frog surveys in the coming months please contact Eva Ford at MRCCC on 5482 4766. You must be prepared to get a bit wet and have a high level of patience!

Editor's note: Australian Frog Calls - Subtropical East by David Stewart is available from the Barung Bookshop



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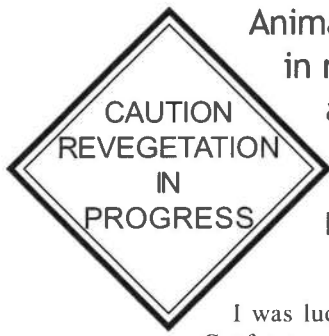
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Animal-plant interactions in rainforest conservation and restoration workshop

Marc Russell
Reveg & Habitat Officer

I was lucky enough to attend the Annual Conference of the Rainforest Co-operative Research Centre (CRC) in Cairns on November 11th thanks to the generous provision of return air fares, accommodation and conference admission by Rainforest CRC (this job does have the odd good spin-off).

“Animals play key roles in rainforest dynamics, via pollination, seed dispersal, seed predation and herbivory. However, the clearing and fragmentation of rainforest has changed the population size, distribution, assemblage composition and behaviour of rainforest animals. These changes have implications for the maintenance of biodiversity in remnant forests, for the restoration of forest on degraded land, and for the interaction of rainforests with their surrounding landscapes. This workshop will bring together researchers examining animal-plant interactions in Australian rainforests to share perspectives on approaches to their research and to discuss the implications of their work for conservation and restoration.”

The workshop began with talks from a range of dedicated scientists on a variety of topics including:

1. Andrew Dennis, David Westcott et al: Seed dispersal at a landscape scale: Does habitat fragmentation affect frugivore community structure and the rates of fruit removal?
2. Peter Green: The role of seed and seedling predators in rainforest dynamics.
3. Ros Blanche: Insect pollinators from tropical rainforests: their role in native forests, forest fragments and agricultural environments.
4. Keith Smith: Are studies into animal-plant interactions of any practical use for rainforest conservation managers?
5. John Kanowski: Animal-plant interactions in rainforest restoration in tropical and subtropical Australia.
6. Marc Russell (Barung Landcare) and Hank Bower (Big Scrub Group): Animal-plant interactions & restoration practice.

We then split into three groups and, within a short time, attempted to discuss key questions in relation to three topics: Pollination, Seed dispersal and Seed and seedling dynamics.

The questions were:

- Q1. In what ways is this interaction (ie, pollination, seed dispersal or seed and seedling dynamics) important in intact rainforest?
- Q2. What services or disservices to human activities come from this interaction (either on-reserve or off-reserve)?
- Q3. In what ways is this interaction threatened or vulnerable to current human-induced impacts?
- Q4. What are the main issues in restoring this interaction: (a) within remnant forest, (b) in forest reinstatement, (c) as elements in production systems?
- Q5. Is it necessary, feasible or cost-effective to manage aspects of this interaction?
- Q6. Identify any priority locations or taxa for management of this type of interaction.

Some attitudes towards rainforest conservation in northern Queensland surprised me. The focus is, of course, on large expanses of forest (reserves), but fragmented patches and private land were considered of little importance. In SEQ and northern NSW, fragments are often all we have left to work with, and many are on private land.

While many varied and interesting ideas were thrown around (most will be published at a later date), I will outline a few of the main outcomes from the discussions.

The importance of interactions in intact forest as models. Larger areas of intact habitat, capable of supporting a diversity of fauna, must be preserved and studied to give us an idea of where we're heading in rainforest rehabilitation, and in re-establishing the dynamic processes involved in a self sustaining system.

The importance of many weed species as habitat in heavily degraded sites. Some weed species are crucial for holding and shading creekbanks, providing food and protection for wildlife and often facilitating the introduction and growth of some native species. It would be far better to focus our resources on controlling weeds that threaten biodiversity in more intact forest areas.

By sensitively replacing exotic species through reveg / regen adjacent to good quality forest, or in important linkages, we can build on existing habitat. Weeds will be less likely to reinfest an area adjacent to healthy native seed sources and where native species are able to create a canopy with minimal edge effects. We also need to prioritise exotic species based on their threat to good quality habitat. Most weeds don't invade relatively intact ecosystems, however plants such as Cats claw creeper are seriously threatening both canopy and understorey. This particular weed may be worse than all the others combined when it comes to biodiversity conservation.

Obviously individual landholders may have their own priorities and replacement plans on their own properties, but as land / resource managers we must consider the bigger picture and maximise outcomes for the limited resources we have available.

Of course we can come up with all the greatest strategies possible through research and prioritisation, however the social factors need to be taken into account.

It is the community - landholders, groups and local government bodies - who ultimately are left with the workload. We need a motivated and aware community, and many of us, to make a real difference. For most of us that means working in our local area on local issues.

To attempt to plant and manage large areas of land in areas that may be some distance away is often unfeasible, so there are many factors we must take into account when assessing the who, why, where, when and how of rainforest conservation. While we need to aim towards a more scientific approach in what we do (and it was wonderful to learn about some of the research being carried out), sometimes we seem to come up with more questions than answers.

We 'foot soldiers' in the quest for a better environment must keep plodding on - doing the best we can with the resources at hand.

PLANTING FOR PLATYPUS
9.30am Dec 11th - opposite Maleny Showgrounds

Woody weed problems? Need the Sidewinder?
Ring the office to put your name on the list
for our next training session.
Training is run on demand, so let us know!

VOLUNTEER NEWS

Help us make a difference

There is something very satisfying about making a contribution, about feeling that we have benefited someone else or the planet, about being part of a larger group of like-minded people sharing goals, values and ideals. Some part of us enjoys contributing to a cause greater than ourselves.

Acting out this contribution, whether through volunteering for Landcare or Meals on Wheels, is very rewarding.

There are many areas within the gamut of Barung activities where you can make a contribution and a difference. There are hands-on practical activities, brain-stretching planning activities, finger-exercising administrative activities. There are activities in the open air, activities inside. Activities for today or tomorrow, activities for next year.

A recent activity very much enjoyed by all was the AGM treeplant in Ruddle Drive where everyone commented on the friendship and the amazing amount achieved by a group working together. The digging, planting, mulching and watering took place effortlessly. Mim, who owns the property, said it would have taken her a year to achieve what the group did in 3 hours. The morning's work was followed by a delicious and well-earned shared lunch courtesy of another group effort.

We invite you to join us, we invite you to participate, and we invite you into shared ownership of Barung.

From someone who has gone from being a member to being an active participant in our Landcare organisation and is loving it!

VOLUNTEER POSITIONS VACANT

PLANT PICK UP PEOPLE - do you have a covered ute or 4WD and are you willing to put your name on a roster for occasional volunteer plant picks-ups (mainly from Landsborough) for the Barung Nursery? Fuel reimbursement available. Please ring Nick or Cali on 5494 3151 (ask for the nursery) if you can help.

ECOTOUR COORDINATOR POSITION - capable organised person required to coordinate EcoTours for 2004 Maleny Wood Expo. Must have good organisational & liaison skills. January to May 2004. Please ring Angie or Mim on 5494 3151 if interested.

INFORMATION NIGHT COORDINATOR - Barung member willing to work with Education Sub-committee to coordinate speakers, bookings & equipment for Barung's monthly Information Nights at Mary Cairncross Scenic Reserve. Please ring Angie or Mim on 5494 3151 if interested.

LETTERS

Dear Russell

Thank you for allowing Land For Wildlife Pine Rivers to visit Barung on Saturday 20th September.

We would like to thank you for your good work as a host for our visit, and for your excellent talk about the history and operation of the nursery.

You did much to ensure the success of our day.

Please find enclosed some of Council's publications which we hope you find useful.

Thank you once again,

Lauren Appleby

Land for Wildlife Extension Officer

Dear Mim and Lin

I recently announced that the Queensland Government intended to waive land tax and transfer duty for landholders and Local Authorities who set aside land for environmental purposes.

This was offered as a genuine incentive to allow the public to play a significant role in the conservation of the native fauna and flora of this State.

To qualify, an application needs to enter into a conservation agreement over the land with the Environmental Protection Agency. This agreement would lead to the land being declared as a nature refuge and its protected status would transfer with the title through any change of ownership.

The Queensland Government believes the incentive will have particular application in South-East Queensland where additional green/open space will help offset the rapid residential and commercial growth currently occurring in this region.

The new arrangement will begin retrospectively from July 1, 2003.

A land owner who starts negotiating with the EPA about a conservation agreement within 12 months of buying the land will be eligible for reimbursement of transfer duty once the agreement is finalised. Private land owners and local councils will be reimbursed for land tax paid on the specific area covered by the conservation agreement.

The Environmental Protection Agency and the Queensland Treasury will administer the scheme with a review planned in two years time.

The initiative will complement existing protected areas such as National Parks, Conservation Parks and Forest Reserves. It is yet another building block in the Government's overall environmental protection strategy. I commend it to you and look forward to working with you to bring it to reality.

Yours sincerely

Peter Beattie MP, Premier & Minister for Trade

Hi Mim

Most 'enjoyable' AGM I've been to! Can I get a dozen *Casuarina torulosa* put aside for me to pick up next time I'm up??

many thanks, Dave Sharp

Area Manager, South Qld/ Northern NSW

Conservation Volunteers Australia

ph: 07 3846 0893 (www.conservationvolunteers.com.au)



When you think about what landcare & Barung can do for you ... also think of ways in which YOU can help Barung. Barung is a non-profit community organisation funded by memberships



If you would like to save paper & postage & READ YOUR NEWSLETTER ELECTRONICALLY, please let us know at barung@sun.big.net.au so we can advise you when it's posted on the website.

Thank you to ...

... Elaine Grant for donation of delicious carrot cakes for the Barung AGM
 ... Phil Brown for ongoing maintenance of Barung's "new" photocopier
 ... Linda Ivezić for her ongoing help with the Barung Management Committee Meeting minutes
 ... Max Smith, Elaine Grant, Barry Liddell Damian Draper for your help with the October / November Newsletter mainout
 ... Colin Hastie for clearing the blocked sewer and bringing the toilet back into operation!

DEADLINE - Friday 9th January for Feb - March Newsletter contributions

Barung Landcare...



Please let us know of any change of address so we can keep membership data up-to-date.
 Please renew your memberships - your support is very important to Barung.

THANKYOU

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Don't mess with the mulch cont'd from p 12

Conversely this moisture-holding gel can be a bit tricky to cope with when propagating these seeds in nurseries, as they may be kept too moist and rot.

The forest's leaf litter and the soil below it is home to a myriad of life forms such as millipedes, mites, snails, spiders, worms, beetles, ticks, fungi and so much more. The leaf litter is the powerhouse of nutrient recycling that maintains the ongoing health of the trees, shrubs and vines that make up the forest.

This leaf litter and the tiny creatures that make it their home, are also the start of the food chain for all the larger creatures of the forest. Take the amazing Brown Antechinus, *Antechinus stuartii*, of our local forests. These little guys are often confused with rodents but are serious carnivores and are distant relatives of the Tassie tiger. I imagine Antechinus with the "Jaws" sound track playing in the background. To see them in action is fantastic! The sight of two furry little ears protruding through the leaf litter doing circles around a Bush cockroach before leaping up to take its prey in one foul swoop and ducking back below the leaf litter is awesome.

And where would the infamous Brush turkey, *Alectura lathami*, be without a good pile of leaf litter to rake? The compost heaps they make from the forest floor are not only crucial to the incubation of their own young, but also the concentrated goodness of these piles makes a perfect home for all sorts of little critters and fungi. Perfect germination sites for some species of plants that need that extra bit of moisture can be found around these piles, and sometimes the composting effects of the pile can even help break seed dormancy.

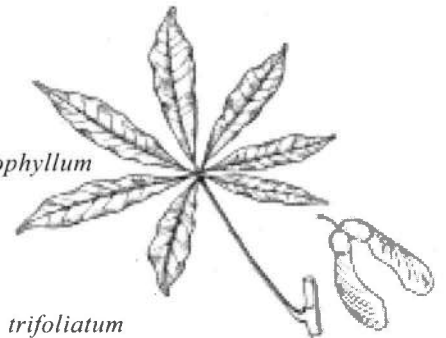
Unfortunately, the Brush turkey cops a lot of bad press due to its activities in some perfect gardens. But where else in the world do humans have the good fortune of living side by side in the suburbs with such a large wild animal, a creature whose greatest crime is building compost heaps and occasionally getting a bit too friendly with one's domestic poultry?

In closing, next time you're hiding out in the forest from whatever dominant paradigm you have challenged, don't forget to appreciate the leaf litter that you are snuggled down in and wonder at all those marvellous little fungi on the log you're using as a pillow.

And as the Clash sang back in the 80's: "I fought the law-n and the law-n won, I fought the law-n and the law-n won" - well for now anyway!

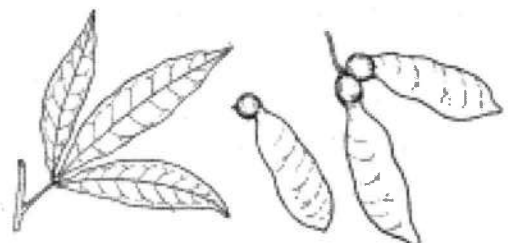
Black Booyong

Argyrodendron actinophyllum



Brown Tulip Oak,

Argyrodendron trifoliatum



Don't mess with the mulch

Spencer Shaw

I'm writing this article to you as I hide away in a far-flung corner of one of the Blackall Range's precious rainforest remnants. My exposure on the evils of too much lawn (see previous newsletter) has brought the full force of the turf barons down upon me. As I write you this, the CLPA (Central Lawn Protection Agency) and FBT (Federal Bureau of Turf) are combing the forest searching for the 'rebel without a mower'.

Anyway, keeping my head down and laying low in this little forest patch is giving me a good chance to re-aquaint myself with the life of the forest floor. I can tell you - the sooner the tree house is finished the better! There's a Black Possum or Bobuck, *Trichosurus caninus*, who thinks my dried pawpaw sticks are just irresistible; common Leaches, *Chthonobdella whitmani*, must think my O+ blood type is the nectar of the gods; and I'm hosting a tick convention of *Ixodes holocyclus* behind my left ear. It was dark when I fled to the forest last night, my nerves got the better of me and,

you guessed it, the call of nature led to a rather extremely painful encounter with the leaves of the Giant-leaf Stinging Tree, *Dendrocnide excelsa*.

Forest floor leaf litter is amazing stuff (if sometimes a little bumpy and prickly). As temperatures increase at this time of year, leaf litter thickens with trees dropping old leaves to reduce their water-loss and to conserve soil moisture by contributing to the thicker mulch layer. Thick layers of leaf litter are more commonly seen in our drier rainforest patches, where the canopy is lower at 10 -15 metres, and on poorer well-drained soils.

A range of seed also adds to the leaf litter at this time of year. This includes the Brown Tulip Oak, *Argyrodendron trifoliatum*, whose bronze-winged fruit gently whirl to earth like little helicopters when the breeze picks up. An amazing adaptation that the *Argyrodendron* genus has made is the development of moisture-conserving gels that surround their seeds. The Black Booyong, *Argyrodendron actinophyllum*, produces an enormous quantity of gel around its seed when wetted. This is great for protecting the seedling from drying out in the harder soils of the Range where it naturally grows.

... cont'd page 11

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