

NEWSLETTER

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BRING A CUP

Just a reminder members again, if you would like a hot cup of coffee or tea at the end of the monthly meeting, you must bring along your own cup.



LORD HOWE ISLAND APRIL, 2022

After a two year wait due to COVID we finally landed on Lord Howe Island (LHI). Our group of 21 from Melbourne consisted of 10 scuba divers and their better halves. LHI is a small island off the coast of NSW and has a population of approximately 350 permanent residence and allows a maximum of 400 tourists. Tourism is its main source of income.

LHI is home to 241 species of indigenous plants and nearly half are found nowhere else in the world and hosts 4 species of palm, the most famous and well known being the Kentia Palm. Until recent years the island was the sole supplier of the palm to the rest of the world but these days many countries are growing them for retail.



Helen in front of the Palms

The Lord Howe Island Banyan, *Ficus columnaris*, is closely related to Australia's Moreton Bay Fig, but has developed a unique ability to send down aerial roots from its ever growing branches. While the Moreton Bay Fig, and other *Ficus* species are all large trees, the columnar aerial roots of the Lord Howe Banyan, which thicken into trunks, allow the tree to keep spreading taking over large areas. Banyan's have the ability to spread over extensive areas by dropping aerial roots from their branches. Upon striking the soil these roots developed into subsidiary trunks which prop up the ever growing branches. In this way the tree has the ability to attain enormous size without the danger of collapsing.



Banyan Tree

The usual tropical plants were in abundance with frangipani's and hibiscus featuring in many gardens and although beautiful we found the fungi much more interesting.



Frangipani



Hawaiian Hibiscus



Adenium
(Desert Rose)



Commelina erecta
(Blue Commelina)



Staghorn Fern

The most unusual fungi on the island are two species which are luminescent. Clusters of the small (1-2cm diameter) Mycena chlorophos sprout from fallen trees in the lowland forest after rain. During the day, they appear white and sticky, but at night they glow bright green and appear as tiny lights on the forest floor. Fortunately it rained continuously the day before we arrived so we were lucky enough to view the

glowing fungi. We took a night time walk down to Neds Beach so our eyes would adjust and we would be able to spot the fungi. We saw many and when we returned to our apartment building we also spotted them in the ferny area surrounding the BBQ facility.



Fungi growing on fallen tree



Glow in the dark fungi day view



Glow in the dark fungi night view

I would recommend Lord Howe Island to anyone looking for a relaxed holiday. There is lots to do and snorkelling at Neds beach, a boat trip around the island and an informative bus trip all over the island were highlights. As the seas were unfavourable on the day we were booked to swim with the turtles this will have to wait for next time.

Helen Salisbury

BALLARAT BEGONIA FESTIVAL

This year's Ballarat Begonia Festival was held from March 11th to 20th, Ballarat Botanical Gardens.

The Conservatory this year looked more like the display you would see at the Fitzroy Gardens Conservatory! As usual masses of upright Tuberous Begonias and baskets of the pendula type hanging above. This year mixed in with the upright Begonias was various foliage plants including young Banana trees (no Banana fruit), Tree Ferns, Philodendrons and other plants. The gardens also was a feature, with colour in the many Annual and Dahlia beds.



Upright Tuberous Begonia



Tuberous Begonia pendula

DAYLILIES



Pelargonium 'Horizon'



Echinacea 'Pow Wow'



Begonia 'Megawatt'



Delphinium 'Pagans Purple'
Delphinium 'Innocence'
Delphinium 'Pink Blush'



Dahlia

I found kindred spirits as soon as we moved into our retirement village home in Wollert. The first folk to welcome us, from the villa directly across the road from us, were Gwen and Trevor Smith. They had moved in from Nambour Queensland in early December 2021. Trevor was President of the Brisbane Daylily Society for four years continuously until the club wound up in Autumn 2010.



Prior to leaving Nambour, Trevor sent 50 bare rooted Daylilies, in shoe boxes, to his daughter in Melbourne to enable him to continue with his gardening passion on his arrival South. Although up to four and half weeks in the post time the plants survived and are now thriving in rows of pots in the back yard, some 8 and ten inches high, looking lovely and fresh. I saw 2 of them in bloom [1/3/2022], photos enclosed. Trevor intends to plant out the Daylilies in the area where the pots now sit to obtain best use of the full Sun.

Daylilies flower for months, bringing colour to gardens from September to Autumn. Some varieties have flowers that last more than a day. There are varieties with double flowers, ruffled petals and blooms in a myriad of colours, including every

tone of yellow, orange, red, brown, purple, white and lime green and an unbelievably mix of colours. There is "Abundantly Joyful" an evergreen double lily with lavender, pink and yellow ruffled flowers. Another exciting evergreen variety "Cherry Picotee" has fragrant white flowers with lovely cherry red picotee edges.

All parts of Daylilies are edible [flowers, buds, tubers and new shoots], they feature in Chinese and Japanese cuisine. You can have Daylily soup, if you are game, give it a go!

Daylily Soup

Early on Summer evenings when the Daylilies are just starting to close, go out and collect as many as you can [they won't reopen anyway]. Strip the petals away from the centre of the flower. Dry the petals in dehydrator or by stringing them with a needle and thread, leaving a little air space between each petal. Crumble into a jar. Midwinter, add these to your soups after you turn off the heat, think of Summer and smile.



In 2009 Trevor Smith had a Daylily Cultivar with distinct fine cream mid-rib named after him. The TJ Smith Daylily has a 6 inch flower, red petals with distinct fine cream midrib, the sepals are cream/pink.

The plant was one of Neal Meade of Meads Daylily Gardens Acasia Ridge Qld's new introductions [no longer trading]. It will be grown and adored by many.

Noelene Park

FIG MUFFINS

Serves 4

Preparation time: 15 minutes

Cooking time: 15 minutes



Ingredients

50g dried figs, chopped.

1 cup (150g) plain flour.

¾ cup (120g) wholemeal plain flour.

1 tablespoon baking powder.

⅓ cup (75g) raw caster sugar.

2 tablespoons chia seeds.

125g mixed fresh or frozen berries*.

¾ cup (180ml) buttermilk.

2 large eggs, at room temperature.

¼ cup (60ml) light olive oil or sunflower oil.

1½ teaspoons natural vanilla extract.

½ teaspoon ground cinnamon.

2 tablespoons sunflower seed kernels.

*Do not thaw frozen berries before using them as this helps prevent them from 'bleeding' through the batter.

Method

1. Place the fig and ½ cup (125ml) water in a small saucepan, then bring to the boil over low heat. Remove from the heat and set aside for 10 minutes for the figs to plump

slightly. Drain well and leave to cool.

2. Preheat the oven to 180° C (160° C fan-forced). Line 24 mini muffin tray holes (30ml capacity) with small paper cases.

3. Sift the flours and baking powder into a bowl, then return the husks to the bowl from the sieve and stir in the caster sugar and chia seeds. Gently stir in the berries and fig.

4. Whisk the buttermilk, eggs, oil and vanilla together in a separate bowl. Add to the flour mixture and fold together until just combined; don't over-mix as the batter does not need to be smooth.

5. Spoon the batter evenly into the paper cases and sprinkle evenly with the cinnamon and sunflower seeds. Bake for 13–15 minutes or until the muffins spring back when lightly pressed.

6. Leave to cool for 5 minutes in the pan, then transfer to a wire rack to cool. (Muffins are best eaten on the day they are baked, however, they freeze well. Wrap each muffin in plastic film and seal in a plastic bag or airtight container for up to 3 months. Thaw at room temperature.)

MEMBERS NEWS



HAPPY BIRTHDAY TO YOU

April: John Aitken, John Mathie, Hazel McGlone, Joan McNair, Rita Page, William Saunders, Margaret Trewella, Pam White.

We wish you all a wonderful celebration.

Welcome to our newest member Val from Lalor. Hope we see you each month at our monthly meetings.

Visit to Conservatory Fitzroy Gardens is planned for June 16th. More details next month.

FIND THE WORD

Well, how did you go with finding the word in the last newsletter? The word is –

TRENDY

The word this month has 6 letters. What could it be?

Look at the four pictures for the clue. Answer next newsletter.



MONTHLY COMPETITION

April 27th: One Container of Chrysanthemums, 6-10 stems, C.V.A.

May 25th: Bowl of Floating Flowers. No More Than 6 Blooms.

MONTHLY MEETING

Meetings start at 8pm, don't be late

April 27th: Weng Lim - Asian Vegetables.

May 25th: Kathleen Tant - Propagation.