

ASBS

*Australian
Systematic
Botany
Society*



Newsletter

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AUSTRALIAN SYSTEMATIC BOTANY SOCIETY INCORPORATED

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Loose-leaf inclusions with this issue

- Application for Membership of ASBS form
- Payment of membership dues (membership renewal) form

Publication dates of previous issue

Austral.Syst.Bot.Soc.Nsltr 112 (September 2002 issue)

Hardcopy: 1st Oct 2002; ASBS Web site: 27th Sep 2002

ASBS Inc. business

The ballot on changes to the Society's rules

Report on the Special General Meeting of the Australian Systematic Botany Society, Canberra, 12th December 2002.

Members will be aware of the recent activity in redrafting the Society's Rules, in order to bring them in line with the ACT Registrar General's Incorporated Associations Act. Both the past and present Council, in particular Bill Barker and Barry Conn, have been heavily involved in the unenviable task of reworking the existing ASBS Rules. All their hard work was put to the test with the recent postal ballot to accept or reject the proposed changes. The purpose of the SGM held in Canberra was to ratify the results of the ballot, prior to the (hopefully) final step of lodging the revised Rules with the Registrar General.

Sixteen members (including four Council members, John Clarkson joining in via a phone hook-up) met in Canberra for what was to be a very brief but nonetheless vitally important meeting. Council is pleased to report overwhelming support from members for the proposed changes (106 to accept, 3 to reject (four selected changes only)), and as such the revised Rules are now in force, pending their imminent lodgment with the Registrar General's Office. Almost a third of ASBS members took part in the ballot, which is also a pleasing outcome, and indicates an active and involved membership who are interested in the future of the Society. On behalf of Council, I would like to thank all members who took part in the ballot for their time and interest.

A special vote of thanks was extended at the meeting to Bill Barker and Barry Conn for their efforts in this long and sometimes tortuous exercise.

Brendan Lepschi
ASBS Secretary

Membership Fees 2003

These are now due and are payable to the Treasurer, Anthony Whalen.

Amount owing is placed on the envelope of this issue **above the Return address** at the bottom left corner, e.g. in the form "Mship dues: Full \$40".

Chapter Conveners have helped in the past to facilitate payment amongst members by assembling and forwarding payments.

Forms to accompany your payment and for applications for new membership are loose enclosures in the envelope.

Contact Anthony if there are any issues.

ASBS President's Report

Presented to Annual General Meeting in Adelaide on 24th September 2002

The Society has completed another year of many diverse activities.

ASBS Newsletter

The Society's *Newsletter* has continued to develop under the excellent editorship of Robyn and Bill Barker. The introduction of more photographs has added to the visual impact of the *Newsletter*. They continue to enthusiastically encourage everyone of the membership to provide articles of interest. As out-going President, I will watch with interest the membership's decision to take the *Newsletter* in an electronic format or as printed copy. Irrespective of the format chosen, as always, it is

up to the members to use this excellent publication to keep everyone informed of what is happening in Australian botany.

ASBS Website

The Society's website has continued to flourish under the editorship of Murray Fagg. All issues since *Number 61* are now available in *Adobe Portable Document Format* (pdf) on our website. Furthermore, "A comparison between the current Rules and the proposed Rules as modified" are provided on the website for the membership. It is hoped that this format will encourage interpretation and discussion of the proposed amendments to the Society's Rules.

5th International Flora Malesiana Symposium

Although I reported on the 5th *International Flora Malesiana Symposium* held in Cairns and Sydney (September 2001) in the previous President's Report, The Society justly deserves to be proud of the support provided for this Symposium. This excellent conference brought together many colleagues who work on various aspects of the flora of the Malesian region. The Society is pleased to have been able to provide financial support to all student members of ASBS who made presentations at this conference. It is with pleasure that I thank and congratulate the presenters and organisers for a very successful conference.

Beyond Robert Brown

The Society was proud to support the *Beyond Robert Brown Symposium* which was the first ASBS conference to be totally organised by post-graduate students. This conference is a model of what can be done to encourage new botanical researchers to present a summary of their research programs even though the projects may not be sufficiently developed for a full presentation at an International gathering. I encourage all students to consider running similar events, either in their own right or in association with other events.

Marking the Robert Brown Bicentenary

It has been a wonderful opportunity for the Society to be involved with the many celebrations of the achievements of Matthew Flinders and Robert Brown. We are proud to have supported the *Investigator 200* conference (December 2001), *Encounter 2002* (March 2001), *Robert Brown 200* conference (May 2002), and future events in northern Australia during the latter part of this year. On behalf of the Society, I sincerely thank Prof. David Mabberley for presenting public lectures in all States on Robert Brown and Ferdinand Bauer. However, it is extremely important to remember the dedication of many ASBS members, across Australia, who have planned and coordinated the many activities that make up this distributed event. I believe that this is the first time that the Society has been involved with such a large distributed event (distributed in space and time).

Amendments to the Society's Rules

The redrafting of the Rules by which the Society operates has been an extremely demanding task that has involved considerable effort over several years. I look forward to the amended Rules being presented to the membership for their formal consideration. Although many of the changes appear to represent minor amendments, the Council believes that the Rules have been

brought into line with the "Associations Incorporation Act 1991". These changes will provide a more robust framework in which the Society operates.

Conclusion

I sincerely thank all members of Council for their dedication to the Society and for their hard work throughout the year. And, I thank all ASBS members for their enthusiastic support to the Society and to Australian systematic botany. It has been a privilege to have been President of the Society since 1999 and I wish the Society well for the future. The Society has a significant role to play in several arenas. One of the important roles is the influencing of the debate on government funding for research into systematic botany, both at the Federal and State levels. ASBS members have the opportunity of providing mentoring of the next generation of systematists via under-graduate and post-graduate University programs, whether they are professional lecturers or not. Despite the limited resources available for plant systematics in Australia, our research output is highly respected internationally. Therefore, we have a voice for influencing plant systematics, and related conservation research and management beyond Australia, particularly in developing countries of Asia and the Pacific. The Society has a valid role to play in keeping the membership informed of opportunities.

The future of the Society is with the membership.

Barry Conn
National Herbarium of New South Wales

Minutes of the 2002 Annual General Meeting of the Australian Systematic Botany Society, Inc.

Tuesday 24th September,
Benham Lecture Theatre, University of Adelaide

Starting time: 6:15 pm.

The President welcomed the 14 members present.

Present: Barry Conn (President - outgoing), Bill Barker (Vice President - outgoing), Anthony Whalen (Treasurer), Brendan Lepschi (Secretary - Minutes).

Apologies: John Clarkson (Vice President-elect), Bob Makinson (Councillor), Andrew Rozefelds (Councillor), Annette Wilson (Public Officer)

1. Minutes of the 2001 Annual General Meeting

That the minutes of the 23rd Annual General Meeting (as published in the *Australian Systematic Botany Society Newsletter* Number 109) be accepted. **Proposed: Barry Conn; seconded: Brendan Lepschi. Carried.** See *Austral.Syst.Bot.Soc.Nsltr* 109: 1 – 11.

2. Business arising from minutes

Nil.

3. President's report

See above.

4. Treasurer's report

See below.

Robyn Barker queried apparently lopsided costs for FASTS subscriptions; this is a result of an error on the part of the auditors, due to the Society working on a calendar rather than financial year.

Tony Orchard queried the Society's GST status, Anthony Whalen informed the meeting that the GST applicability threshold is now \$100,000 turnover p.a. as opposed to the previous \$50,000 p.a., and as such the Society is exempt from GST.

Fee changes were briefly discussed, proposed that they remain at their present levels. **Proposed: Tony Orchard; seconded: Jürgen Kellerman. Carried.**

Proposed that the financial statement for the Society for 2002 be accepted. **Proposed: Robyn Barker; seconded: Steve Hopper. Carried.**

5. ASBS Rules (Constitution)

Suggested changes to the ASBS Rules (Constitution) were presented by Bill Barker. Proposed that these be accepted, subject to voting by the society members, with special thanks to Bill Barker and Barry Conn for grinding through this tortuous issue. **Proposed: Steve Hopper; seconded: Peter Wilson. Carried. Action:** Voting papers to be prepared and distributed to Society members by Bill and Robyn Barker.

6. Newsletter & web page report

Vote of special thanks from the floor for Bill and Robyn Barker and Murray Fagg for their efforts in producing a high quality newsletter and maintaining the Society website (respectively).

ASBS Newsletter Report (2002)

Bill and Robyn Barker took over the editing of the ASBS *Newsletter* from Bob Hill in 2001, their first issue being no. 108 for September. Prior to this there had been some delays in meeting the publishing deadlines for issues and this was causing some difficulty for council in meeting some obligations. It is now more or less back on track although some of the issues were published a month later than they should have been. Dates of publication of both hard and electronic copy are now recorded on the inside of the front cover.

There has been no lack of material for the *Newsletter* in this time and those members who have contributed items over the last year are thanked.

Costs have been reduced in two ways.

- First, one of the major costs and delays in producing the *Newsletter* has been the printing of the cover. Following discussions with the company who prints the Newsletter, the suggestion was made that they be printed for several issues in advance and this has now been done. Only consistent content on the cover is now printed in colour. The changing text is added on both sides as part of the printing of the internal pages.
- Second, the font (same size), line spacing and column width have been chosen to compact the content.
- Third, we have provided the printers with digitised pdf files which means they do not have to change anything.

We have adopted a policy of adding in digitised illustrative material where space allows.

An Excel file of the most up to date mailing list is obtained from the Treasurer, Anthony Whalen, before the printing of each issue, and the addresses printed on the envelopes in AD.

A change was made from plastic bags to B5 envelopes for posting since enquiries to Australia Post indicated that there was no necessity for the contents to be visible. The envelopes are cheaper and do away with the necessity for some sort of sealing, which was a chore for successive editors. Placing the newsletters within the envelopes and their posting is now carried out by a private company (Bedford Industries) for minimal cost.

Bedford Industries also add in any brochures which might be needed for each issue for an additional cost, this cost being met by either by ASBS for ASBS material or by the advertising company for advertising material. From issue 112 a flat rate of \$100 (plus the cost of having the brochures inserted by the packing company) will be charged for advertising material.

Following resolutions at successive AGMs the newsletter is now projected electronically as a pdf on the web page and we thank Murray Fagg for his cooperation in this process. We should also pay tribute to other editors before us, in Clyde Dunlop and Bob Hill, along with the earlier webmaster, Andrew Lyne, who also spent time in trying to achieve this.

Council is now in a position where they can ask the membership to choose how they wish to receive the newsletter. We still need to address what we do with about fliers for those members who decide to take the electronic copy.

Robyn & Bill Barker
State Herbarium of South Australia

ASBS Web-site Report (2002)

In the last three months 171 pages on the ASBS Web site have been modified or added. Nearly all pages have been linked to an ASBS style-sheet. A navigational line has been added to the top right corner of each page. Files in pdf format for all recent newsletters have been placed on the web in both high and low resolution format.

Murray Fagg
Australian National Botanic Gardens
Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research

8. Eichler Research Fund

Recipients of Eichler Research Fund grants for 2001 are:

- Ann Bohte (University of Melbourne) – \$1000 for “Floral development and evolution in the ‘Arillastrum’ group (Myrtaceae)”
- Christina Flann (University of Melbourne) – \$1000 for “Systematics of Euciton (Gnaphalieae: Asteraceae) with a focus on Australia and New Zealand – molecular component”
- Nicola Streiber (University of Sydney/Royal Botanic Gardens) – \$1000 for “Systematics of Chloanthoideae (Lamiaceae) – molecular studies”
- Xiufu Zhang (University of New England) – \$1000 for “Spikelet morphology of Schoeneae (Cyperaceae) – SEM studies”

9. Electronic newsletter

General discussion as to the pros and cons of producing an electronic version of the *Newsletter*. Peter Wilson suggests that the best course of action is to investigate the costs associated with both media types, and to submit this to the membership as a proposal. **Action:** Bill and Robyn Barker to investigate costings and submit report to Council and members.

10. New products

Comments re the present lack of new Society-based products (e.g. books). Steve Hopper suggests a revised volume along the lines of Morley & Toelken, Tony Orchard proposes a revised version of the *Flora of Central Australia*, Anthony Whalen some regional interactive identification keys. **Action:** Council to consider options.

11. Any other business

• Reimbursement of student expenses (for those presenting papers at ASBS Conferences)

Ann Bohte and Greg Guerin were re-imbursed for their costs registration fee for the 2002 Conference.

• Next AGM

To be held in Melbourne, September 2003 in association with the *Plant Systematics in Australia* conference celebrating the 150th Anniversary of the National Herbarium of Victoria.

12. Election Results

Two positions vacant due to the stepping down of President and Vice President upon completion of their terms. Returning Officer (Brendan Lepschi) indicated that the number of nominations received were the same as the number of vacancies. The following members elected

(without voting) to the positions indicated and took office from the close of the AGM.

President: Steve Hopper
 Vice President: John Clarkson
 Secretary: Brendan Lepschi
 Treasurer: Anthony Whalen
 Councillor: Bob Makinson
 Councillor: Andrew Rozefelds

The outgoing President (Barry Conn) thanked the Council for their efforts over the previous year.

Meeting closed: 7:45 pm

Treasurer's Report

It is my pleasure to present the annual financial statement for the year ended 31 December 2001. The finances of the Society are run on the calendar year so the figures being presented are for the year 01 Jan 2001 to 31 Dec 2001.

Membership

We have written off two unfinancial members who have not paid their dues since 2000 and seven other members have resigned. 12 new members have joined since the last AGM in late 2001 (see list below). There has been a slight movement of Ordinary members taking up the concessional fee as they retire from full time work. At the other end of the spectrum, it has been encouraging to see a 20% increase in the number of students joining the Society.

Approximately 20% of members remain unfinancial, matching the trends from previous years. Late payments continue to be a problem for the Society, despite most members now providing email addresses, which has helped to speed up reminder correspondence. There has also been a hangover from the increase in membership fees by \$5 in 2000. Some members were caught out by the price change, paying the old rate in 2001. Most of these small payments have now been accounted for, however members who still owe these partial membership fees are asked to add this to their next subscription payments.

The following new members for late 2001 and 2002 are welcomed to the Society:

- Ms. Barbara Archer, Norseman, WA
- Mr. Steven Britt, Kundabung, NSW
- Mr. Terrence Boyle, Queensland Herbarium
- Ms. Rebecca Dillon, School of Plant Science, University of Tasmania
- Mr. Greg Guerin, Adelaide University

- Mr. Mark Harrington, James Cook University
- Ms. Nanette Hooker, Townsville, QLD
- Dr. Julie Marginson, Buninyong, VIC
- Ms. Anna Monro, Centre for Plant Biodiversity Research, Canberra, ACT
- Mr. Jaymie Norris, Crawley, WA
- Mrs. Amanda Spooner, Glen Forrest, WA
- Ms. Maldry Weston, ABRS, Canberra, ACT

General Fund

Income

Overall interest rates on all Society accounts were down from the good rates experienced in 2000. For 2001, the Society actually spent slightly more than it made, the General Fund finishing the year with a \$355.28 deficit.

The 6th *Bryology Workshop* in 2001 was an expensive outlay for the Society with \$8,862 being spent. However thanks to good management by the organisers, costs were completely recovered.

Subscription fees from members were up in 2001 by nearly \$2000 from 2000. This reflects the increase membership numbers and the rise of annual fees by \$5.

Sale of books dropped in 2001, perhaps reflecting the lack of new productions during this period. I would encourage the Society to consider the support of potential new books, as our current holdings are getting somewhat thin (see Current Assets section below).

Expenditure

Conference expenditure actually exceeded the newsletter expenses, traditionally the General Fund's most expensive outlay. The expenditure on conferences for 2001 exceeded the money returned on them by about \$3000. This is in

Table 1. Membership of ASBS at 17 September 2002 (unfinancial members in brackets).

Fee	Full	Concessional	Gratis	Total
Ordinary	195 (41)	43 (4)	0	238 (45)
Student	Not appl.	43 (11)	0	43 (11)
Institutional	12 (4)	Not appl.	15	27 (4)
Life	Not appl.	Not appl.	2	2
Total	207 (45)	86 (15)	17	310 (60)

contrast to 2000 where the society actually made a profit of about \$3500 on conferences. Most of the conference costs for 2001 and 2002 relate to supporting the highly successful *Brown 200 Symposium* around the country. This included an advance for the Sydney leg of \$2000 to be paid back in 2002. Most of the costs of this free lecture series around the country were met by the ASBS, however the Society recognises the generous support of organisations such as the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland. Conference advances and returns made clearly can fluctuate from year to year; it is an area of expenditure the Council needs to keep a tighter control on.

The cost per newsletter actually came down slightly in 2002 as compared to 2001; thanks to Bill and Robyn Barker changing printer and packaging companies and finding cost savings in bulk newsletter cover printing.

The Society also paid a one off \$1029.60 in 2001 for the production of the 30 Nancy T. Burbidge medals.

Taxation

The society continues with its tax-exempt status. I recently spoke with the Australian Taxation Office as to whether the Society should continue as a non-GST collecting entity. Despite the Society being charged about \$600 in GST a year with newsletter production, the ATO advised was that it probably would not be worth changing our status. One of the negative effects of collecting GST would be that we would have to be added to membership subscription payments, potentially increasing the annual fees and the Treasurer's work load keeping track of all such payments. I recommend that we continue as a non-GST gathering society for the next few years, reviewing the issue again at a later date.

Organisers of conferences are reminded that ASBS is not registered as a GST gathering entity. Planners of large conferences need to obtain an ABN and the relevant status or work through a registered institution (such as a herbarium). Smaller conferences and workshops can be run through the Society as long as no GST is charged or recovered.

Audit

The 2001 books were audited in April by Acumen Alliance, a Canberra based company. Change of auditing company from Cannings Accountants was made as a matter of the new Treasurer's geographic convenience. Auditing costs have increased from the 2000 audit, however not to the extent that was feared at last years AGM.

Current Assets in the General Fund

The Society held at the close of 2001 assets of \$43,315 (\$42,475 in cash, \$840 in books). This year I conducted a stock take of the books the Society owns, held by Katy Mallett (ASBS sales) and state conveners. We currently own:

- 70 copies of *History of Systematic Botany in Australia*
- 1 copy of *Ecology of Southern Conifers*
- 4 copies of the Proceedings of the *Dampier 2000* conference
- 75 copies of *Evolution of the Flora and Fauna or Arid Australia* (only partially owned by the ASBS).

The Hansjörg Eichler Research Fund

In terms of the investment growth it has been a slow year, interest rates fell significantly in 2001 and have stayed low into 2002. The diversification of the Research Fund across a range of account types has helped to reduce the risk of loss. Whilst most accounts produced moderate gains, one account, the Commonwealth Banks Growth Fund, registered a loss of \$336.14 in 2001. This was due to the high proportion of overseas shares, which have suffered consistent losses over this period. Despite the Growth Fund account, the Research Fund investments produced \$4261 in interest in the 2001 calendar year.

Net assets increased from \$140,434 to \$166,201 in the twelve months ended 31st December 2001. Most of the surplus coming through donations which once again included a generous donation of \$20000 by Marlies Eichler. Four grants totalling \$4000 were awarded to students in 2001.

I have reviewed the account structure of the Eichler Fund, which has not been significantly changed since 1997. As of September 2002 the Eichler Cash Management Trust (1 of 4 Eichler accounts) held close to \$75000. It was agreed by the Council that this is too much money to keep in this type of account. The Commonwealth Bank's financial services are providing a mini-financial plan for this money, with the aim of investing some of this in 2 or 3 Colonial First State (owned by the Commonwealth) investment accounts. These are planned to be long-term accounts, with the money to be held for a minimum of 5-7 years. The interest from these investments will still be put towards student support annually as is currently done. It is hoped the mini-plan options will be presented to the Council within the next few weeks.

Periodic reviews will be conducted of the Eichler Fund to ensure the proper balance is maintained between good rates of return and risk minimization.

Summary

It has been a somewhat expensive couple of years for the Society; the drop in interest rates and active conference support over this period has seen the Society eat into the General Fund assets (2001 ending \$4500 less that was made in 2000). It is this Treasurer's advice that the Society provides financial support in 2003 for conferences and other major events with a greater

emphasis on cost recovery. This should help stabilize the Societies assets for the short to medium term. I do recognise, however that there is a need for the Society to constantly look for new opportunities to support, such as new books, to help keep the Society relevant and a strong proponent of systematic botany.

Anthony Whalen
Honorary Treasurer

**AUSTRALIAN SYSTEMATIC BOTANY SOCIETY, INC.
AUDITED FINANCIAL STATEMENT FOR YEAR ENDED 31st DECEMBER 2001***

CONTENTS

1. Committee Members' Report
2. Statement of Income and Expenditure Research Fund
3. Statement of Income and Expenditure General Fund
4. Balance Sheet
5. Notes To and Forming Part of the Accounts
6. Statement by Members of the Committee
7. Independent Audit Report to the Members

COMMITTEE MEMBERS' REPORT

Your committee members submit the financial statement of the Australian Systematic Botany Society Incorporated for the financial year ended 31 December 2001.

Public Officer Andrew Lyne Resigned Sep 2001
Annette Wilson Appointed Sep 2001

Committee Members

The names of the committee members who held office throughout the year and at the date of this report are:

President	Barry Conn	
Vice President	Bill Barker	
Secretary	Robyn Barker	Resigned Sep 2001
	Brendan Lepschi	Appointed Sep 2001
Treasurer	Elizabeth Brown	Resigned Sep 2001
	Anthony Whalen	Appointed Sep 2001
Councillors	Kristina Lemson	Resigned Sep 2001
	Andrew Rozefelds	Appointed Sep 2001
	Bob Makinson	

Principal Activities

The principal activities of the association during the financial year were to promote systematic botany in Australia.

Significant Changes

No significant change in the nature of these activities occurred during the year.

Operating Result

The surplus for the year ended 2001 amounted to \$ 32,451 (2000: \$33,771)

Table 1. Membership of ASBS 17 September 2002 (unfinancial members in brackets).

	17 Sep 2002	2001	2000	1999
	\$	\$	\$	\$
Research Fund	n.av	32,806	28,120	26,149
General Fund		(355)	5,651	2,157
		32,451	33,771	28,306

Signed in accordance with a resolution of the members of the Committee.

B. Conn (President)
A. Whalen (Treasurer)
Dated this 30th day of April 2002

* Editorial note. As in previous issues we have reproduced the figures presented to the AGM by the Treasurer, which in addition to the audited accounts include this year's finances to that time with comments.

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
1999–2001 (audited figures) and to 17th Sep 2002**

RESEARCH FUND

	17 Sep 2002	2001	2000	1999
Income				
Donations to Research Fund	22,524.00	20,822.00	24,840.88	25,647.08
Investment income	n.av.	4,261.89	6,662.07	3,511.06
Income transferred from the Asset Revaluation reserve (see Note 1)	n.av.	11,058.19	0.00	0.00
		36,142.08	31,02.95	29,158.14
Expenditure				
Research Grants	¹ 4,000.00	3,000.00	3,000.00	3000.00
Loss on Bond and Growth Funds	n.av.	336.14	0.00	0.00
Bank Charges	n.av.	0.00	383.01	8.50
		3,336.14	3,383.01	2,254.50
Surplus for the year		32,805.94	28,119.94	26,149.64

**STATEMENT OF INCOME AND EXPENDITURE
1999–2001 (audited figures) and to 17th Sep 2002**

GENERAL FUND

	17 Sep 2002	2001	2000	1999
Income				
Sales				
Merchandise	0.00	0.00	0.00	128.00
History books	824.00	523.00	704.50	690.00
Miscellaneous books	0.00	19.80	0.00	151.95
		542.80	704.50	969.95
Less cost of goods sold				
Opening stock - merchandise	n.av.	0.00	0.00	502.00
Opening stock - books	n.av.	940.00	1,040.00	1,195.00
Closing stock - merchandise	n.av.	0.00	0.00	0.00
Closing stock - books	n.av.	(840.00)	(940.00)	(1,040.00)
		100.00	100.00	657.00
Gross Surplus from Trading		442.80	604.50	312.95
Advertising	19.73	0.00	50.00	318.39
Conferences	0.00	² 8,864.10	8,044.70	0.00
Investment income	n.av.	1,431.56	1,644.15	1,336.42
Subscriptions to ASBS Inc	³ 8,490.00	9,835.20	7,940.00	9,075.00
Postage recovery	0.00	0.00	0.00	143.04
Sundry income	0.00	0.00	100.00	110.07
Total Income		20,573.66	19,187.85	11,295.87
Expenditure				
Auditors remuneration	935.00	792.00	350.00	550.00
Bank fees	n.av.	47.87	43.42	51.19
Conference expenses	⁴ 5,343.51	⁵ 11,781.38	4,500.00	965.00
Newsletter expenses	⁶ 4,191.29	⁷ 6,563.59	⁸ 7587.66	4,133.74

¹ Grants paid in 2002 for 2001 recipients. Note: no grants as yet awarded for 2002.

² ⁶th Bryological Workshop registration fees

³ Approximately 20% of membership are late in paying dues for 2002

⁴ Most conference costs relate to the *Robert Brown 200*

⁵ ⁶th Bryological Workshop \$8,012.40; *Robert Brown 200* \$2,243.46; *Flora Malesiana* student support \$600; Councillor airfares \$925.52.

⁶ 3 issues of Newsletter – covering 109-111

Australian Systematic Botany Society Newsletter 113 (December 2002)

Royalties - history book sales	0.00	0.00	0.00	1,123.68
Subscriptions (FASTS)	⁹ 1,105.50	¹⁰ 451.00	1056.00	864.00
Newsletter Printing back issues	0.00	0.00	0.00	265.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	0.00	¹¹ 1,293.10	0.00	1,197.10
		20,928.94	13,537.08	9,138.53
Surplus (Deficit) for year		(355.28)	5,650.77	2,157.34

BALANCE SHEET AS AT 31st DECEMBER 2001

	17 Sep 2002	2001	2000	1999
Current Assets				
Cash and Investments				
Research Fund				
Cash at bank	920.27	697.29	692.72	694.44
Investments				
Cash Management Fund	76,183.92	58,590.36	44,356.63	22,412.01
Australian Bond Fund	58,370.56	56,753.44	44,724.57	41,439.51
Growth Fund	47,057.53	50,160.16	50,660.20	47,916.26
		166,201.25	140,434.12	112,462.22
General Fund				
Cash at bank	6,316.41	3,381.56	21,673.47	2,470.49
Investments				
Term Deposit A	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00	10,000.00
Term Deposit B	0.00	0.00	0.00	5,535.36
Cash Management Acct	24,103.43	29,094.11	15,220.86	18,563.87
		42,475.67	46,894.33	36,569.72
		208,676.92	187,328.45	149,031.94
Debtors		144.00	0.00	0.00
Inventories				
General Fund				
History of Systematic Botany	n.av.	840.00	940.00	1,020.00
Total Current Assets		209,660.92	188,268.45	150,071.94
Net Assets		209,660.92	188,268.45	150,071.94
Members' Funds				
Research Fund				
Accumulated surplus at end of year	n.av.	166,755.71	133,949.77	105,829.83
Asset Revaluation Reserve	n.av.	0.00	11,058.19	6,632.39
		166,755.71	145,007.96	112,462.22
General Fund				
Accumulated surplus at end of year		42,905.21	43260.49	37609.72
Total Members' Funds		209,660.92	188,268.45	150,071.94

⁷ 4 issues of Newsletter – covering 105-108; also \$850 startup money for 6th *Bryological Workshop* mistakenly attributed by Auditors to this category.

⁸ 5 issues of Newsletter – covering 100-104

⁹ FASTS Subscription for July 2001 to June 2002 based on 201 full ordinary members, at \$5.50 per member.

¹⁰ B. Makinson, B. Lepschi attended the FASTS supported "Science meets Parliament" day, auditors mistakenly placed cost of attendance under this item. FASTS subscription for this period was paid in 2002, see item 10.

¹¹ Production of Nancy T. Burbidge medals \$1,029.60; Annual returns for 1997-2000 & Society rule changes 1998 to the Registrar General's Office \$250; general postage \$13.50.

1. Statement of Significant Accounting Policies

This report is a special purpose financial report in order to satisfy the financial reporting requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (ACT). The committee has determined that the association is not a reporting entity.

The financial report has been prepared in accordance with the requirements of the Associations Incorporation Act (ACT).

No Australian Standards, Urgent Issues Group Consensus Views or other authoritative pronouncements of the Australian Accounting Standards Board have been intentionally applied.

The financial report has been prepared on an accruals basis and is based on historic costs and does not take into account changing money values, or except where specifically stated, current valuations of non-current assets.

The following specific accounting policies, which are consistent with the previous period unless

otherwise stated, have been adopted in the preparation of this financial report.

(a) Membership

Membership is recorded on a cash basis.

(b) Income Tax

Under present legislation the association is exempt from income tax accordingly no provision has been made in the accounts.

(c) Asset Revaluation Reserve

In prior years the movement in the Bond and Growth Funds have been recorded as asset revaluations. In 2001, management have decided to recognise these movements as income. The balance of the asset revaluation reserve was transferred to income in the 2001 year.

(d) Comparative Figures

Where required by Accounting Standards comparative figures have been adjusted to conform with the changes in presentation for the current year.

(e) Members Funds

In accordance with the rules of the association accumulated funds are not available for the distribution to members.

	17 Sep 2002	2001	2000	1999
2 Investment Income				
Research Fund				
Interest Received				
Cheque account	n.av.	4.57	2.78	17.09
Distributions				
Cash Management Trust	995.96	1,590.85	1,328.79	186.01
Australian Bond and Growth Fund	n.av.	2,666.47	5,330.50	3,307.96
Total Research Fund	4,261.89	6,662.07	3,511.06	
General Fund				
Interest Received				
Cheque account	20.09	182.97	33.12	7.62
Term deposits	93.26	375.34	825.36	606.72
Distributions		558.31	858.48	614.34
Cash Management Trust	¹² 509.32	873.25	785.67	722.08
Total General Fund		1,431.56	1,644.15	1,336.42
		5,693.45	8,306.22	4,847.48
3 Accumulated Funds				
Research Fund				
Accumulated surplus (start)		133,949.77	105,829.83	79,680.19
Surplus / (deficit) this year		32,805.94	28,119.94	26,149.64
Accumulated surplus (end)		166,755.71	133,949.77	105,829.83
General Fund				
Accumulated surplus (start)		43,260.49	37,609.72	35,452.38
Surplus / (deficit) this year		(355.28)	5,650.77	2,157.34
Accumulated surplus (end)		42,905.21	43,260.49	37,609.72
Total Accumulated Surplus (end)		209,660.92	177,210.26	143,439.55

¹² Cash Management Trust, distribution income for 3rd Quarter not included

4 Reserves

Asset Revaluation Reserve				
	Balance at beginning of year	11,058.19	6,632.39	5,276.41
	Transfers this year	(11,058.19)	4,425.80	1,355.98
	Balance at end of year	0.00	11,058.19	6,632.39

5. Members of the Committee

The names of the committee members who have held office during the financial year are:

President	Barry Conn
Vice President	Bill Barker
Secretary	Brendan Lepschi
Treasurer	Anthony Whalen
Councillors	Andrew Rozefelds Bob Makinson
<i>Public Officer</i>	Annette Wilson

6. Research Committee

The Australian Systematic Botany Society is an approved research institute.

The approved membership of the Research Committee comprises:

Terry Macfarlane
Peter Weston
Barry Conn
Robyn Barker
John Clarkson
Tim Entwisle

INDEPENDENT AUDIT REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF THE AUSTRALIAN SYSTEMATIC BOTANY SOCIETY INC.

Scope

We have audited the special purpose financial statements of the Australian Systematic Botany Society Inc. (the Society) for the financial year ended 31 December 2001. The Committee members are responsible for the preparation and presentation of the special purpose financial statements and the information they contain. We have conducted an independent audit of these special purpose financial statements in order to express an opinion on them to the members of the Society.

The audit has been conducted in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards to provide reasonable assurance as to whether the special purpose financial statements are free of material misstatement. Our procedures included examination, on a test basis, of evidence supporting the amounts and other disclosures in the special purpose financial statements, and the evaluation of accounting policies and significant accounting estimates. These procedures have been undertaken to form an opinion as to whether, in all material respects, the financial statements are presented fairly in accordance with the Australian Auditing Standards, other mandatory professional reporting requirements [and relevant statutory requirements and other requirements], in Australia so as to present a view which is consistent with our understanding of the Society's financial position and results of its operations.

The audit opinion expressed in this report has been formed on the above basis.

Qualification

As is common for organisations of this type, it is not practicable for the Society to maintain an effective system of internal control over the receipt of revenues until their initial entry in the accounting records. Accordingly, our audit was limited to the amounts recorded.

Qualified Audit Opinion

Subject to the above qualification, in our opinion:

- a) The special purpose financial statements of the Australian Systematic Botany Society Inc. are properly drawn up:
 - i) so as to give a true and fair view of the assets and liabilities of the Society as at the 31 December 2001 and the income and expenditure of the Society for the financial year ended on that date and the other matters required by Subsection 72(2) of the Associations Incorporation Act to be dealt with in the financial statements;
 - ii) in accordance with the provision of the Associations Incorporation Act; and
 - iii) in accordance with proper accounting standards.
- b) We have obtained all the information and explanations which to the best of our knowledge and belief were necessary for the purpose of the audit; and
- c) Proper accounting records and other records have been kept by the Society as required by the Act.

Acumen Alliance
Canberra, 30 April 2002

News

More changes in Adelaide

The restructure of our parent Department for Environment & Heritage was finalised after several months of consultation on 6th December. It has given fresh vigour to resolution of management in the State Herbarium. This followed segregation of former divisions to new Departments of Water, Land and Biodiversity Conservation (taking elements of departments dealing with water and agriculture), and the Environmental Protection Agency.

In the restructure the State Herbarium has returned to join the Botanic Gardens, but along with it are retained its scientific links in the National Parks & Wildlife Division, namely the Biological Survey and another section dealing with management of threatened animal and plant species and communities. The result is a new Science and Conservation Division headed by Stephen Forbes, with new Deputy Director, Peter Alexander, who has a background in environmental science. The Botanic Gardens is seen as a focus for projecting science and conservation issues to the public. Laurie Haegi, former Manager of the State Herbarium, remains as an Assistant Director dealing with regional operations and conservation in the National Parks area.

Now a structure and reporting lines are in place, it is hoped that a new Herbarium head can be sought soon. At the same time, it is hoped to cement links with the Environmental Biology Department of the University of Adelaide in a formal partnership arrangement.

Bill Barker
State Herbarium of South Australia

Kew Library Catalogue goes on-line

The Kew Library Catalogue has gone live at www.kew.org/library/index.html making information about Kew's collections available to a world-wide readership for the first time.

This unique resource currently holds more than 145,000 individual records, mostly for published material like monographs and pamphlets. About 700 of the ca. 4,000 periodical titles held at Kew have entries on the catalogue, mainly those acquired by purchase.

The catalogue has been created since 1991 using the Unicorn Collection Management System. The library's old catalogue cards were converted to electronic format between 1992 and 1995, and since then new material has been added at ca. 3,000 items per year. There are plans to make the catalogue entries for the Archives and Illustrations Collections available at a later stage.

More recent additions to the catalogue include recommended Internet resources relating to botany, viewed via hyperlink from within bibliographic records. Another key feature is the ability to search other libraries from within the catalogue itself. Live connections to the Library of Congress and the Natural History Museum, London, are already set up and links to further libraries with relevant collections will be added in the future.

Contact me with any questions or comments.

Gabriele Popp
Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew
webcat@kew.org

Editorial

Spelling errors

Our apology for the greater number of spelling errors than usual in the last issue.

I have a spelling checker,
It came with my PC;
It plainly marks four my revue,
Mistakes I cannot sea.
I've run this poem threw it,
I'm sure your please to no,
Its letter perfect in it's weigh,
My checker tolled me sew.

Source: Unknown (email circulation)

Articles

Banksia alpina Wilhelmi – a nomen nudum, a nomen subnudum, or a valid name?

Philip Short

Northern Territory Herbarium, P.O. Box 496, Palmerston, Northern Territory 0831

I read with interest a recent article by Dick Brummitt (2002) entitled *A consideration of "nomina subnuda"*. I think the case of the name *Banksia alpina*, a name mentioned in an obscure German publication by Carl Wilhelmi (Wilhelmi 1871) – employed at the botanic gardens, Melbourne (MEL) in the 1850s and 60s – raises some interesting issues. The relevant passage, from a translation by Mrs Doris Sinkora, is:

... we visited the 1270 metre (4500 feet) high Mount William, on which we camped at 620 metres (2200 feet) altitude for five days, to explore this mountain in all directions. One morning, when we climbed the plateau, the wind was whipping the clouds beneath us ...

At the highest point we found again many strong springs, most of them go on to form the Wannon River, while in the opposite direction they run into the Wimmera River. The vegetation on the plateau consisted mainly of shrubs in the Proteaceae, gnarled trees of *Banksia alpina*, a splendid Cunoniaceae, *Bauera sessiliflora* F.Muell., a large number of Myrtaceae and herbaceous plants, which are found only on this mountain.

I believe we currently call the plant in question, *Banksia saxicola*, details of which are:

Banksia saxicola A.S.George, Nuytsia 3: 297 (1981). Type: "Summit of Mt William, The Grampians, Victoria, 17 Feb. 1977, A. S. George 14398. Holo: MEL; iso: AD, BRI, HO, K, MEL, NSW, PERTH."

Apart from the Grampians, where Alex George recorded that the species "grows above 600m both on exposed summits and in sheltered gullies and slopes", it is otherwise only known from Wilsons Promontory. Of the habit of the species Alex wrote "in exposed situations to 3 m tall, very spreading, much-branched".

Before discussing whether the name *B. alpina* is indeed a valid one I should note that another species of *Banksia* occurs in the Grampians. It is the widespread and variable species *B. marginata*

which ranges from sea level to heights of 1400 m, occurs in a variety of habitats, and forms "possible hybrids with *B. saxicola*" (Jeanes 1996).

I remember when I first ventured to the top of Mt William I was already familiar with *B. marginata* and as such, when I first saw the species now known as *B. saxicola* I had no hesitation in recognising it as something distinct. I imagine Wilhelmi did exactly the same. He was an experienced collector, before the expedition to the Grampians having already botanised in South Australia and other parts of Victoria (Kraehenbuehl 1990). This included visits to Mt Abrupe and Mt Sturgeon only days before the ascent of Mt William. I therefore have no doubt that Wilhelmi would not have confused the widespread species *B. marginata* with the entity he called *B. alpina*, even if he saw both at the summit of Mt William.

Thus, I believe that the names *B. alpina* and *B. saxicola* are synonymous.

However, did Wilhelmi provide a valid description? From reading the *Code*, from Dick's comments in his paper, and at least until now my own usage, I suspect it is generally considered that a description, for the purposes of the *Code*, is one that describes morphological and anatomical attributes of a plant. If so, then we have to decide if just two words, "gnarled tree", constitutes such a description. Some readers will undoubtedly believe it does, others I suspect will be thinking that it is lacking in detail, that surely more information should be supplied before it can be seriously considered as a validating description and that it is a *nomen nudum*, or at best a *nomen subnudum*.

Since reading Dick's paper I've thought more about this name and have convinced myself that we should accept *B. alpina* as having been validly published. This is not because I think "gnarled tree" is an adequate description by itself but because I think that there are other aspects of Wilhelmi's article that should be considered as being part of the description, i.e. the locality details and the chosen epithet.

As biologists we all know that many species are endemic to certain regions and that some have very specific habitats. In the case of the names *B. alpina* and *B. saxicola* the very information that both Carl Wilhelmi and Alex George observed or gathered their specimens from the summit or plateau of Mt William is surely significant.

I think there is a very good case for arguing that a valid description is *a recording by the author(s), in the original place of publication of a name, of any attribute(s) of a taxon that aid(s) in its recognition.* Morphological, anatomical, chemical, genetic, ecological and geographic attributes should all be considered as being part of a description.

I now come to the question of the meaning of names/epithets and whether they too can be considered to be *part* of the description. I'm inclined to think they should be. Many names in use reflect an attribute of the plant that, at least at the time of the coining of the name, is thought to be unique to that organism. That attribute may relate to the very things I've discussed above, i.e. distribution and habitat, and of course distinct morphological attributes.

Perhaps too I should remind readers that in pre-Linnaean days a name was often a short, descriptive phrase. Therefore, is it not logical to consider that at least some early binomials are simply contracted phrases that were coined with that same concept in mind?

Before going any further I reiterate that I believe an epithet can be seen as being *part* of the overall description. I am not suggesting for one moment that a name alone constitutes a description.

In regard to the epithets of the two banksias being discussed the epithet *saxicola* reflects the fact that this species is a rock-dweller. The epithet *alpina* is clearly in reference to the locality in which Wilhelmi observed the plant. It is stretching things a bit to describe the summit of Mt Wilhelmi as being alpine, but it is high and windswept and it does snow there on occasions. Compared to the surrounding countryside it has alpine qualities and as such is not a totally unreasonable epithet.

If the epithet can be considered to be part of the description then "gnarled trees of *Banksia alpina*" becomes something along the lines of a "gnarled tree of elevated places", making for a more informative description, albeit that we already know its place of collection from the rest of Wilhelmi's article.

Of the various *nomen subnuda* incorporated in Dick Brummitt's article one which took my eye was *Boerhavia rubicunda* Steudel. Steudel's "description" merely consisted of the use of the symbol indicating that the name applies to a perennial. The symbol was also applied to nine other names in the same publication. Ignoring the meaning of the epithet the name should surely be rejected, the "description" not allowing the named taxon to be distinguished from other listed species. However, the epithet means "red" or "ruddy". I don't know the species of *Boerhavia* but does the combination of the colour of the plant, or a part of the plant, plus the fact that it is a perennial species allow application of the name in the context of the rest of the publication? Sometimes the consideration of the meaning of the name may only lead to more uncertainty, but in others I suspect it will lead to clarity.

One aspect I haven't considered above is that of the intent of an author. That is, did an author mean to provide a name that would be accepted by the botanical community. In the case of Allan Cunningham's name *Capparis gibbosa*, the earliest binomial for the boab (for details see Wilson & Guymer, 1999), I concur with the argument that Cunningham did not mean to publish the name, at least in the form it was published. The critical thing here is that Cunningham's journals were published after his death. However, in regard to *B. alpina* – and I suspect it is the same for the majority of similar problem names – I feel that I cannot unequivocally state that Wilhelmi did or did not mean to validly publish the name. Undoubtedly he would have been familiar with the reasonably detailed descriptions commonly provided by Ferdinand Mueller and other botanists when naming species. However, for all we know he may have ascribed to a view expressed in the 1850s that the compilation of long Latin descriptions was a "bad German habit" (Sinkora & Short, 1987) and wanted no part of it. Perhaps most importantly, if he didn't mean the name to be adopted by others then why did he use it? Although it must be considered I suspect that we can rarely be *certain* as to the intent of an author and are more often than not reduced to doing little more than guessing, and surely guesswork should have no part in making decisions.

I have not checked to see whether there are any specimens in MEL, K or elsewhere that were annotated as *B. alpina* by Wilhelmi (or if I did when employed at MEL I've forgotten!). Nor have I checked a letter from Wilhelmi to William Hooker (Wilhelmi 1857), in which he described his trip to the Grampians and perhaps made further reference to the banksia from Mt William. Perhaps such checks would result in clarification

as to the intent of Wilhelmi regarding the publication of the name *B. alpina*. However, to what extent, if any, should we base decisions pertaining to valid publication on unpublished information? I suspect it should be ignored, hence my wording above, i.e. “in its original place of publication”. As to the correct application of the name I would have to retract from my belief that the names *B. alpina* and *B. saxicola* are synonymous if type specimens of *B. alpina* are extant and of *B. marginata*. However, that has no bearing on whether or not the name *B. alpina* is validly published and, as noted, I think it is.

Acknowledgments

Dick Brummitt very kindly provided comments on a couple of drafts of this note. It was due to his input that I mentioned that the intent of an author should be considered. He also confirmed that he only considers morphological (including micromorphological) characters to constitute a validating description.

Dick also believes, perhaps correctly, that some of the views expressed above are extreme. He also considered them interesting and worthy of

airing and I hope that they result in some friendly debate between colleagues.

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The discovery of *Stockwellia* (Myrtaceae)

Rebel Elick

CSIRO Plant Industry, Australian National Herbarium,
PO Box 780, Atherton Qld 4883

Peter Wilson

National Herbarium of New South Wales,
Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney NSW 2000

After a period of some thirty years, the name *Stockwellia* has finally been published (Carr et al. 2002). The plant became known in botanical circles not long after its discovery and references to it, and its distinctive characteristics, began appearing in the literature. The first published mention of this taxon seems to have been by Briggs & Johnson (1979: 216) who refer to it as an ‘undescribed species from the Atherton Tableland’ with some features of both *Eucalyptopsis* and *Allosyncarpia*.

Stockwellia is indeed close to these two genera and the relationship suggested by morphology has been confirmed from DNA evidence (see, for example, Udovicic & Ladiges 2000). The specific epithet *quadrifida* is given in reference to the way the flower opens. The flowers have what looks like a calyptra but this is an extension of the hypanthium with tiny petals and sepals at the top.

When the flower opens, the extended part splits into four segments that have stamens at their tip.

The name *Stockwellia* is given in honour of its discoverer, the late Victor Charles Stockwell (1918–1999), a Forest Ranger with the Queensland Forest Service. Vic Stockwell worked in many parts of Queensland, and in North Queensland was stationed at Cooktown, Innisfail, Millaa Millaa and Atherton. He was always interested in strange or unusual tree species and was probably the first person to realize that the forestry subdistrict of Millaa Millaa was the only such district in Queensland to be completely devoid of the fire-dependant eucalypts.

The story of its discovery begins in 1971. Keith Gould of Atherton had had some training in aerial photo interpretation at university and sought to revise the procedures for timber assessment by



Two of Victor Stockwell's children, Peter Stockwell and Rowena Riek, on site with one of the trees, September 2002.
Ph. CSIRO

making use of aerial photography. Working closely with experienced Forest Rangers he found he could assist them considerably by identifying different categories of forests in terms of timber productivity, and also identify appropriate access for the harvesting of individual timber sale areas. In return, he was able to 'ground-truth' what he had identified on the aerial photos by having experienced Rangers confirm the actual volumes of timber available for harvest on particular sites.

Keith did some work with Vic Stockwell who was the Forest Ranger in charge of timber harvesting on the eastern section of the Atherton Tableland. Vic had asked him to see if he could identify areas of potentially useful timber in his region. In scanning the aerial photos Keith saw a small patch of forest that had numerous large

trees with emergent crowns. Some species of trees with emergent crowns are easily identifiable on the photos, e.g. Kauri Pine and Rose Gum, but these crowns looked quite different. Keith asked Vic if he knew about the trees and what they might be. Vic could not recollect actually inspecting this particular place, but seemed surprised that a patch of large trees remained in an area so close to a Forestry access road.

And so it was Vic and Keith set out to inspect the area and find the trees seen on the aerial photos. When they got to the site they were indeed surprised to find trees of a species they did not recognise. They were surprised that Vic could not recognise them, as Vic knew all the large tree species in the area under his control. However, this one had him stumped. The trees certainly looked as though they could be suitable for timber - they were large and had long straight boles and excellent form. They collected some botanical material and took it back to Atherton for identification.

The material was shown to other Forest Rangers. These included Sam Dansie, whose ability in species identification was unquestionably the best in the Forestry Department, and they were really amazed when he, too, could not identify it. Vic then took the sample to Bernie Hyland as the rain forest taxonomy expert. The sample they had collected was not particularly good, but it was enough to get Bernie intrigued. He

asked Vic to take him to the trees to get better specimen material, and it then emerged that a previously unknown species had been discovered.

It is interesting to note that had *Stockwellia* not been a large tree visible on aerial photos, and had it not looked to have potential as a commercial timber tree, it may have remained undiscovered for some time.

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More memories of Alice Springs

George Chippendale

4 Raoul Place, Lyons ACT 2606

It was 9 July 1954 I arrived in Alice Springs. On the long, long trip in a DC3 or DC4, I had been wondering what I would do about identifying grasses, sedges and a few hundred other plant types. Having worked in Sydney, it was easy. Ask Joyce Vickery, Lawrie Johnson, Joy Thompson, Mary Tindale, Alma Lee – and in memory, when I was 15 +, I had talked to Mr Blakely.

I had been working on cultivated garden plants for some time, so what adjustments would I have to make? Also, in the weeks prior to departure, I dreamed about crocodiles – shows how little I knew about the Centre. What books would I need? Sydney had given me a *Queensland Flora*, a *Critical Revision of the Eucalypts*, and, among some presents, Ernestine Hill's *The Territory* and a lamp with *Boronia* flowers in the lampshade. However, I found that the Animal Industry Branch had a copy of Bentham's *Flora Australiensis* and a *Flora of South Australia*. That was a good start.

My first customer was Bernie Kilgariff, at that stage a poultry farmer – what was killing his chooks? I can't recall whether I fixed that one or not. Then, what was wrong with his citrus? I think I worked that one OK – zinc deficiency. It was clear this was not the ordinary sort of herbarium work.

Within a couple of weeks, I had visitors, Noel Lothian and Harold Caulfield, on a collecting trip, and I was asked to join them. We drove in several vehicles out around Haast Bluff area and back to Alice in about three days. We all collected identical specimens, but I seemed to get a fewer number, and found out much later it was because I wrote notes, and Noel apparently did not.

Also, very soon after arrival, other visitors were Joy Garden (later Thompson) and her architect friend Val Llhuede. My family had not yet arrived, and I was in the hostel, so was free to accompany Joy and Val to the outdoor (freezing) picture show. I also took them to see Standley Chasm in the new Landrover I had been given for work. At work I started reading files, about Charles Gardner's visit to Central Australia, and about the stock inspectors reports. To utilize my previous work, I compiled a list of plants suitable to grow in Alice Springs; this was without knowing the long-term conditions of the Centre.

It was roneoed and found its way into the *Centralian Advocate*. I didn't really want that.

My family arrived in August, and almost immediately I was told I would be accompanying a stock inspector named, believe-it-or-not, Charlie Brown, to Tobermorey Station, near the Queensland border, where we were to take part in experiments concerning the serious poisonous plant problem concerning *Acacia georginae*. Once at Tobermorey, we were soon joined by a team of CSIRO people. Although we were camped around the homestead, we were given all meals in the homestead. It was a rather rough and ready place, but Mrs Anderson made meals for a mob of us, perhaps up to 10 or 12, and including morning and afternoon tea if we were in the near neighbourhood.

I helped to prepare pens and get some cattle into them, and collected leaves of *Acacia georginae* and *Astrebla pectinata* (Mitchell grass) which were used in feeding trials. Other people from our Branch arrived, too, including Jimmy Barnes, veterinarian, and Jimmy Fawcett, stock inspector. We also hoped to find a "safe" paddock where cattle could graze with impunity. Cattle had been poisoned by gidyea in most paddocks, but the owners had observed that sometimes some paddocks were safe. I talked to the owners of Tobermorey and Manners Creek Stations.

I decided to look at Argadargada Station, and so drove through Urandangie (hotel and police station) and got to Georgina Downs Station where Mr and Mrs Charlie Payne welcomed me with an evening meal. When I was leaving there, about dusk, to travel 90 miles, I asked which way to go. Charlie told me to go out about ten miles and go through the netting fence and I'd be sure to be on the right track. After 20 miles, I had not seen a netting fence, so I returned to the Station. Charlie said, "Oh yes, there is no netting on the fence, we just call it that"!!! On arriving at Argadargada, a campfire was burning and I found stock inspector Jack Travers and was welcomed with a cup of coffee. Next day I met Sam and Daphne Calder. Daphne had been Daphne Campbell, actress, in *40,000 Horsemen*, and Sam was later Member for the NT. Back at Tobermorey, we had difficulty in getting the cattle to eat gidyea, but eventually they did, and after forcing them to walk up and down a paddock, some died with typical gidyea poisoning symptoms.

Of course, I collected specimens all round the district, but we all went back to Alice Springs, where I was glad to rejoin my family.

A different lot of jobs awaited me – diseased nectarine trees, collecting *Isotoma petraea* and *Swainsona horniana* for the Australian Phytochemical Survey, meeting our new field biologist, Warren Hitchcock, who had been an ornithologist at the Melbourne Museum. I went on short collecting trips with Bob Winkworth, and also with Warren. I also re-met Neil Jones, geologist, who had been at University with me.

I put in orders for herbarium boxes and shelves, a microscope, drying paper, plant presses, and life became more “normal”. I must mention our

excellent Admin. Officer, Tom Hare. Tom had a keen appreciation of what field workers needed, and did everything to help. He told me that I should imagine he had a 44-gallon drum in his room, full of cash, and he didn't need estimates and other paper work, so just ask and he would reach into the drum and hand our cash. Further about Tom – We had an aboriginal labourer at our research farm, and Paddy would come and knock on Tom's side window, say he was going on walkabout and wanted his holiday pay *now*. Tom got it quickly and Paddy went off. Perhaps several months later, Paddy would appear at the window again and tell Tom he was back, and get rid of that other feller!

Eichler Research Fund Report

Systematics of *Euchiton* (Gnaphalieae: Asteraceae) with a focus on Australia and New Zealand

Christina Flann

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Interim Report on Hansjörg Eichler Research Fund Grant

*Project component: Resolving the *Euchiton traversii* - *Euchiton argentifolius* complex using molecular AFLP technique*

The component of my PhD work funded by the Eichler Research Fund addresses the confusion about species definition involving *E. argentifolius* and *E. traversii* utilising the molecular technique of AFLP. The process involves cutting isolated DNA into fragments with restriction endonucleases, multiplying selected fragments using PCR, then ligating primer combinations to the fragments. Fragments are labelled such that when they are run on an electrophoresis gel and separated on size, the resulting banding patterns can be read and compared. This is part of a wider investigation into the genus and follows a morphological component addressing the same species complex. As with all projects, changes to the planned approach prove necessary along the way and time lines move. Several unforeseen (but some very interesting) factors have arisen resulting in a delay in starting the component relevant to the Eichler application. Due to the unseasonal summer last year additional fieldwork was necessary in March and April, much beyond the expected February timeline when it was envisaged that the morphological analysis of the *E. argentifolius* - *E. traversii* group was to be undertaken. Then the morphological work showed an unexpected trend linking the

Australian *E. argentifolius* with a New Zealand species, thought to be endemic to that country. This significant range extension as well as solid differences between *E. argentifolius* and *E. traversii* form the basis of an article addressing this at genus level by Ward, Breitwieser and Flann which is at the manuscript stage.

This in turn necessitated waiting for more loans of material to confirm the trend before embarking on the molecular work, and I'm still waiting for those loans. It also means that additional plant material is required for the AFLP analysis to completely cover the new questions and new Zealand workers will hopefully be obtaining this field material for me this season (December 2002-March 2003). Hence the component for which this grant was obtained has not yet commenced. In the interim, molecular work for another component is underway. This involves sequencing of the ITS region across the genus. Completing this component before the AFLP analysis has advantages as it allows familiarisation with the laboratory while using small sample sizes in preparation for the large numbers involved in AFLP work. Concurrently with the ITS lab work, DNA for use in the AFLP analysis is being isolated.

In the revised timeline (and I'm sure there will be many before the end of this project), the AFLP component should commence in January 2003 and run until April

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Obituary

Carrie Michell

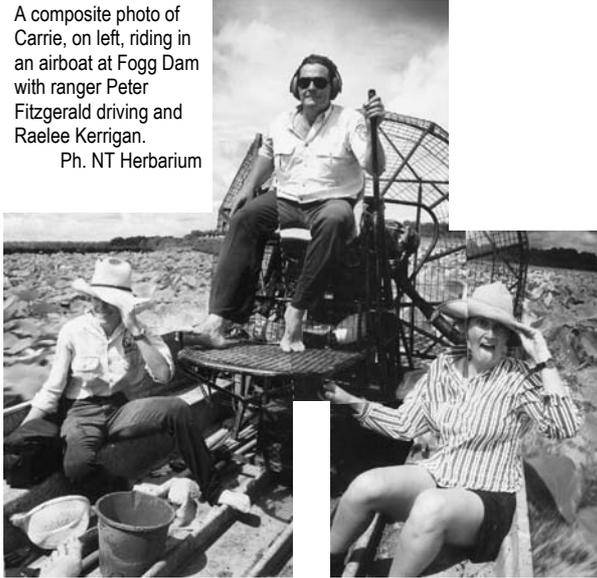
NT Parks and Wildlife Commission Botanist, Carrie Michell died suddenly on the 30th September 2002 at just 31 years of age. Carrie grew up in Katherine on Maud Creek Station, often jogging the 30 plus km home from school rather than take the bus. (This attitude was retained throughout her life, taking some of her coworkers on the most exhausting of explorative botanical walks). Carrie completed a Science Degree at the Northern Territory University, with Honors in Chemistry, then made her way back to Katherine. Here she began her career as a Botanist with the former Department of Lands, Planning and Environment in July 1994, collecting numerous plants in the Victoria River District whilst undertaking surveys there.

In 1996, Carrie moved to the Northern Territory Herbarium, Darwin, supplying plant samples to AMRAD (Australian Medical Research and Development Corporation) for investigation of pharmaceutical potential. Carrie quickly became the Project Manager. With the Landcruiser, fridge (filled with steaks and iced coffees), maps and botanical references on the front dash Carrie covered most of the NT, exploring the plants and country to all NT borders. Carrie gained a reputation for finding many obscure and overlooked plants due to her persistence and eye for detail. However, the pull of Katherine strengthened and with an opportunity provided by a position jointly funded by the Tropical Savannas CRC and Parks and Wildlife Commission of the NT, Carrie returned to Katherine in 1999. There, she was employed to record the grasses and other plants of the Yinberrie Hills as part of research into the decline of the Gouldian Finch and other granivorous birds. This she accomplished in typical style squeezing every minute of daylight from the day and most if not all the energy from those fortunate enough to volunteer their services to Carrie.



Subsequently, Carrie undertook the task of vegetation mapping for Nitmiluk (Katherine Gorge) National Park. In doing this, Carrie regarded the field botany as the enjoyable part of the project and increased the number of plant species recorded for the Park from 983 to 1379 in just two years. These include many plants previously unknown in the Northern Territory (e.g. *Mitrasacme phascoides*, *Cyperus uniolooides* and *Fimbristylis fimbristylloides*) or new to science. It was Carrie's attention to detail and reluctance to merely apply a name in its broad sense that resulted in many being placed aside awaiting further study or description of new species. Two species have so far been described using her collections as types (*Lithomyrtus hypoleuca* F.Muell ex N.Snow & Guymer and *Glinus sessiliflorus* P.S.Short). Her work ethic, meticulousness and love of country inspired all who came in contact with her.

A composite photo of Carrie, on left, riding in an airboat at Fogg Dam with ranger Peter Fitzgerald driving and Raelee Kerrigan. Ph. NT Herbarium



Carrie's contribution to the botanical knowledge of the Northern Territory is important with over 4500 plant specimens lodged in the NT Herbarium as well as other national and international herbaria. Greater still is the knowledge and friendship that she shared with many of us. Carrie was a warm and genuine person who had a knack of making people feel good about them selves. Her broad smile, good humour and friendship will be sorely missed at DNA. A shrub from the Yinberrie Hills north of Katherine is to be named in her honour.

Jenni Risler, Biodiversity Research
Ian Cowie, NT Herbarium
Department of Infrastructure, Planning and
Environment, Darwin

Retirement

Rod Henderson of the Queensland Herbarium

Rodney John Francis Henderson retired from the Queensland Public Service on 29 November 2002 after a career of just over 48 years, of which 41 years have been with the Queensland Herbarium. A farewell luncheon was held for him at the Mt Coot-tha Botanic Gardens Restaurant on 22 November, where present and past members of the staff of the Queensland Herbarium were able to honour Rod.

After commencing as a clerk with the Department of Public Lands in August 1954 at the age of 16, Rod took up a cadetship with the Department of Agriculture and Stock in February 1957. Three years after this he was appointed Assistant Botanist at the Queensland Herbarium. He started writing research papers in the mid 1960's after an initial phase of "getting to know the ropes" under capable mentors of Stan Blake, Lindsay Smith, Selwyn Everist and Les Pedley.

Rod had wide botanical interests in the groups he studied taxonomically, which ranged from the Solanaceae, Liliaceae (in particular the genus *Dianella*), Euphorbiaceae and more recently Rubiaceae. Field work took him to many areas of Queensland and later in his career travel grants from ABRIS enabled him to collect in New South Wales, Victoria, Tasmania and the SW corner of

Western Australia. As a result of field activity there are about three and a half thousand voucher specimens of Rod's, either as sole collector or as a collector with other botanists.

He was meticulous in the investigation of the groups he studied, and used a number of methods of research based on morphology, cytology, anatomy and palynology. Of particular interest to Rod was the application of the correct botanical nomenclature to the taxa he described and in the process of perfecting the application of the *International Code of Botanical Nomenclature*, he became the nomenclatural guru for BRI. Indeed he became so well versed both in his knowledge of botanical Latin and in the interpretation of the Code that his expertise was sought after both nationally and internationally over the years. He has attended the Nomenclature Sessions of 3 International Botanical Congresses and participated with enthusiasm in the debates from which new editions of the Code are based. His interest in nomenclature and its application to the naming of plants took Rod to the Linnean Hierarchy Symposium at the Smithsonian Institution in 2001 and he is planning to attend the 2005 International Botanical Congress in Vienna.

Rod was actively involved with ASBS from the days of its inauguration, being its second vice-president and Newsletter editor from 1975 until 1978. Many of the teething problems of the early days were facilitated through Rod's participation in the assisting of the smooth running of the Society.

After his stint with ASBS Rod was appointed the ABLO for the 1978-79 term. Although set back financially, he often talks about this period as being one of the highlights of his life, particularly as he was able to take his wife Shonee and seven children with him and enrol the school aged ones in local English schools in Surrey, about 40 km from Kew. En route to the U.K. Rod visited botanical institutions in New Caledonia, Fiji, Hawaii, California, Missouri, Washington, New York and Boston and on the return trip he visited Singapore and Perth. While he was at Kew Rod wrote his own duty statement and recommended that one be written for future ABLOs.

Rod has overseen three core activities at the Queensland Herbarium during his career and it is going to be a challenge to fill his shoes in these areas. They are overseeing the maintenance of the *Queensland Herbarium Plant Catalogues*, the editorship of the *Queensland Census* and the technical editor for the Herbarium journal *Austrobaileya*. The Catalogues have been of great use for BRI staff, where, as well as being a definitive listing of all plant taxa recognised at BRI, it is the main source of information about revisional work on Australian plant families. Although the *Queensland Census* has essentially been a spin-off from the HERBRECS database, it nevertheless required a considerable skill in pruning out extraneous matter before publication and Rod exhibited the skill and patience to guide this process to publication on three occasions in 1994, 1997 and 2002. Finally it was the quality control of the technical editing of nomenclatural issues for *Austrobaileya* that Rod came into his own, and one knew that if a manuscript had passed through the "Henderson" bottleneck there was a good chance it was in much better shape than it was before.

An attribute that Rod is well known for is his friendliness and approachability in all matters, botanical and general. Although he has endured a number of hardships in his life, the way he has overcome them has been a witness and inspiration to me and no doubt many others. Although Rod has now retired officially, he has already joined the league of the research associates at BRI, and plans to finish off some of his research projects on the days he is not occupied with his other main interests in life,

square dancing and involvement with his grandchildren.

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Mimosaceae - *Acacia hendersonii* L.Pedley, *Austrobaileya* 5(2): 309 (1999).

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Bryan Simon
Queensland Herbarium

CHAH Report

The Council of Heads of Australian Herbaria (CHAH) held its annual meeting at The University of New England, Armidale on 2nd and 3rd October 2002. Jeremy Bruhl, ably assisted by Ian Telford, provided spectacular food and faultless organisation (apart from being unable to raise the temperature just a few degrees in the evenings). The major outcomes of the meeting were:

Rural meeting

- The first meeting of CHAH outside a capital city, and the first meeting in a 'regional' and university herbarium, providing excellent opportunities for promotion in rural areas.

Australia's Virtual Herbarium

- Benefiting again from meeting back-to-back with HISCOM, the information technology committee of CHAH. Representatives of HISCOM attended the CHAH meeting as observers.
- The Memorandum of Understanding between herbaria and Environment Australia concerning Australia's Virtual Herbarium received the final signatory.
- Progress reporting on Australia's Virtual Herbarium showed that the project is well underway in all jurisdictions; the targets remain ambitious and herbaria have identified mechanisms to improve data exchange. The planned review in early 2003 (one year after the project began) will provide information as to how each herbarium is tracking as well as the project as a whole

- Databasing of university herbaria, and of the cryptogams (fungi, algae, lichens and bryophytes) in all herbaria, will become later stages of the Australia's Virtual Herbarium project. CHAH supports an approach by universities to the Australian Research Council to fund a scoping study for the databasing of all university herbaria in Australia.
- Agreed to guidelines for the preparation of a plant Consensus Census for the whole of Australia, reconciling the various State and Territory censuses that already exist and establishing protocols to establish a list of preferred plant names to be used in the AVH.
- CHAH to be incorporated, primarily as a means to dealing with data requests through Australia's Virtual Herbarium. An incorporated CHAH will be able to respond directly to requests and to accept and distribute any monies received to cover costs of data recovery.
- Commitment to an agreement for data and expertise exchange with Environment Australia, acknowledging their key role in the Australia's Virtual Herbarium project. Similar agreements with other organisations, some with cost implications, will be arranged in future through the chair of CHAH.

Australian Biological Resources Study

- Concern expressed at cuts to the budget of the Australian Biological Resources Study (ABRS; Environment Australia) in 2002, and endorsement for seeking meeting with Minister Kemp as per letter sent in May 2002.

Australian Botanical Liaison Officer

- Renewed support for the Australian Botanical Liaison Officer position at Royal Botanic Gardens Kew with a number of actions to make the position more relevant and suitable for funding by ABRBS and other sources (e.g. role of Kew as node in Australia's Virtual Herbarium, flexibility in the length of the appointment to 3-12 months, curation assistance for Kew in exchange for extra financial support from them, greater emphasis on research and training role rather than answering inquiries, and possibility of expanding the role to 'biodiversity' rather than just 'botany').

Australian Quarantine and Inspection Service

- Agreement for CHAH working party to continue liaising with AQIS to streamline and improve procedures for intercepting herbarium specimens.

Access to genetic resources

- Concern about the impact on bona fide scientific research of State and Federal regulations regarding access to genetic resources. CHAH will seek input into any proposed changes to existing legislation.
- Major regional herbaria, such as the N.C.W. Beadle Herbarium at the University of New England, extend the offer of support to visiting botanists in the planning and execution of their field work (e.g. access to electronic specimen data, local knowledge, and herbarium facilities) and encourage botanists visiting such regions to lodge replicate specimens with those herbaria.

Staff expertise

- The 1997 publication 'Plant Systematics Research in Australasia' to be converted to web format and made available through the CHAH website. This database will join the 'Resources of Australian Herbaria' document already available on the site. Researchers will be asked to update their own entries across the internet, and links with databases of faunal expertise and the databases managed by

Australian Biological Resources Study will be explored.

- Agreement to hold a training workshop in Brisbane for herbarium technical officers, on the use of spatial information in herbaria.
- Agreement to continue monitoring the human resources available for cryptogam (fungi, algae, lichens and bryophytes) studies in Australian herbaria, and encourage the provision of expertise necessary for current service delivery and for research into these poorly known groups.

International biodiversity issues

- Strong support for the Australian node of the Global Biodiversity Information Facility to be based on a distributed model similar to Australia's Virtual Herbarium, for CHAH to be involved in development of this node, and for Australian Biological Resources Study to be the physical location of the node in the first instance.
- Support for CHAH to contribute to Australia's reporting against the international Strategy for Plant Conservation as required, under the direction of Environment Australia.

Herbarium operations

- Evaluation of pricing structures for access to botanical information and other data held by herbaria.
- Standard loan conditions for the lending of herbarium specimens to be posted on the CHAH website.
- Establishment of a working group to devise standard formats for the citation of manuscript names prior to formal publication.

CHAH operations

- Initiation of quarterly teleconferences to monitor action items, in particular progress with Australia's Virtual Herbarium. This will improve communication and accountability within CHAH.
- Tim Entwisle to continue as chair in 2003.
- Next annual meeting to be held in Alice Springs, in October 2004.

Dr Tim Entwisle
Chair, CHAH

ABLO Report

Peter Bostock reports on his last three months as ABLO. He has been replaced by Dr Roberta Cowan.

My final three months as ABLO has passed 'in a flash', so to speak. The gradual onset of autumn, the gales and autumnal leaf-fall, were a reminder that our time in London was coming to an end. As 'luck' would have it, we left London just a few days before the winter weather arrived, having enjoyed what many described as a mild November! Our arrival in Brisbane was heralded by temperatures soaring through the mid 30's, with signs everywhere of the lower than usual rainfall received by much of Australia while we were away.

My ABLO duties continued apace, interspersed with my own research into Australian fern types; my weekly visits to the Natural History Museum culminated in a set of photographs of all relevant types, approximately 150 collections in all. Similarly, at Kew I extracted and photographed upwards of 220 type collections. I also examined the fern holdings at Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh (E), including a very comprehensive set of Robert Brown duplicates. Staff at Edinburgh were very welcoming, and extended an invitation to Australian botanists travelling to the UK. It is worth noting that their Robert Brown collection is the next largest after Kew and the BM, at some 3000 sheets.

Australian and New Zealand visitors, though perhaps fewer in number than during the summer months, were still a welcome presence at Kew. Mike Bayly and Alison Kellow (WELT) visited for a week in mid-September, studying Scrophulariaceae, while Helen and Bill Henderson of Perth visited for about 6 weeks from mid-October, researching the Australian plant collector, Augustus Oldfield. Kelly Shepherd, Univ. of WA, spent a few days in mid November examining K and BM holdings of Salicornioideae, before attending a systematics symposium at Leiden. Other visitors included Ian Creswell (ABRS), Pam Catcheside (AD) and Sharon Willoughby (Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, Victoria).

Many of you will now be aware that Kew's Library Catalogue is available via the internet (www.rbgekew.org.uk/library) to the botanical

community following a very successful intranet trial period. Kew is also trialling digital imaging of specimens, having recently installed flat-bed A3 scanners in a number of locations around the Herbarium. These scanning systems, based on a mechanical design by Kew staff, use inverted Epson scanners and a movable stage to keep specimens 'right-side' up. In addition, digital cameras are being fitted to a considerable number of binocular microscopes for close-up imaging. The Cibachrome system, which is reaching the end of its useful life, is expected to be phased out within the next two years.

Kew Gardens continued to provide a wealth of events; their autumn theme was 'Autumn Cornucopia', and included Apple identification days, fungal forays, cucurbits in the Waterlily house (culminating in an eagerly anticipated sale of pumpkins, squashes and various gourds), and the re-opening of the Orangery as a restaurant and function centre. The Kew Herbarium seminars during this period included an amusing and informative talk by Martin Sands on his botanical experiences in New Guinea. Dr Mike Lock retired as an Assistant Keeper in late September. He will continue to edit *Kew Bulletin*.

Pat and I enjoyed our time in the UK immensely. There is no doubt that the experience of working and living in Kew has had a profound effect on both of us. Professionally, I am indebted to the many people at Kew and the Natural History Museum who assisted me in carrying out my research and the ABLO tasks, and for both of us, the many friends we made at Gloucester Court (the ABLO residence at Kew for the past five years), and at Kew Gardens and the Natural History Museum, in particular, will remain continually in our thoughts.

My replacement, Roberta Cowan, has now taken over, and I wish her well. We managed a brief overlap only, so I hope my updated notes on ABLO duties, in part based on notes inherited from Neville Marchant, who inherited them from Rod Seppelt etc. (you get the picture) will be of assistance to her.

Peter Bostock
Queensland Herbarium

Book review

Everlasting Daisies of Australia: identification, propagation, cultivation

Australian Daisy Study Group (2002)

Everlasting Daisies of Australia: identification, propagation, cultivation. *Australian Daisy Study Group (2002): C.H. Jerram & Associates in association with R.G. & F.J. Richardson, Victoria.*

Price \$A49.95 plus \$A10 postage within Australia.

ISBN 0958743967, colour, soft cover, section sewn, 196 pages.

Available from R.G. & F.J. Richardson, PO Box 42, Meredith, Victoria, 3333.

Email: richardson@weedinfo.com.au; website: www.weedinfo.com.au

This is another publication from the very active Australian Daisy Study Group which is formed from members of the Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants (ASGAP).

As the title suggests this is not a taxonomic work but is aimed at the reader interested in native daisies from a utilisation or natural history perspective, and thus is valuable to a range of users.

The eight authors listed consist of the editorial committee of the Study Group. Chapters are not attributed to particular authorship and, as behoves such a collective work, the acknowledgments are appropriately comprehensive.

The Introduction sets out the ground rules and it is here that we discover that the project covers only 12 of the estimated 27 genera of the 'everlastings'. The genera covered include the most widespread and most widely cultivated groups of colourful and predominantly annual species e.g. *Bracteantha*, *Chrysocephalum* and *Rhodanthe* (previously included within *Helipterum*). Not included are genera such as *Myriocephalus*, *Podolepis*, *Polycalymma* and *Ozothamnus*. However the genera which are included are covered extensively, even including those species of limited geographic range or decorativeness that are not in cultivation.

Chapter 1 outlines the main characteristics of everlastings, explaining the structure and function of the inflorescence, and is generally useful for most daisies. This is accomplished by a combination of clear drawings and an explanation

of terms in plain language with the technical term following in brackets e.g. 'minute individual flowers (florets)'. There is also an extensive glossary at the end of the book.

Chapters 2 to 6 covers the hands-on use for everlastings - cultivation, propagation, gardening, floral art, floriculture - these 30 pages are the compilation of the accumulated experience and research of the study group and other researchers. There are useful general tips on growing, and lots of specific details on seed propagation, including tables of recommendations of pre-treatments, sowing times and storage. The authors might have sounded a bit more of a cautionary note on the subject of seed collecting - particularly the permit requirements which have become quite strict in some states. From the perspective of a herbarium dweller the particular subject of documentation and vouchering usually raises its ugly head at this point - very boring and sometimes difficult if you are wandering across the countryside collecting pretty flowers - but extremely useful for future reference.

Chapters 7-8 are the preliminary to the individual species descriptions in chapter 9. Chapter 7 takes a quick run through the reproductive biology of everlastings with a gentle hint at the ongoing work of generic revision in the short discussion of generic relationships and hybridisation. Chapter 8 contains the keys to the species of eight of the 12 genera covered by this book and would be the focus of any criticisms I would have:

- there is not an overall generic key to either the genera covered or to all of the everlastings
- there are not keys to species for all of the genera covered i.e. *Bracteantha* and *Chrysocephalum*
- there are inconsistencies between keys in such things as the indigenous range of the species - which can be a useful means of elimination of possibilities, at least with wild-collected material

However I recognise that the authors worked from that which was available and that they may not have felt comfortable amending the work of other authors or constructing keys of their own, particularly in a group still a taxonomic 'work-in-progress'.

The great bulk of the book consists of the descriptions of genera and individual species in chapter 9. This is well laid out in a user-friendly format, similar to many field guides. This consists of a plant description, flowering period, propagation, cultivation and uses, distribution and habitat, synonym, similar species and in many cases includes photographs of the plant or inflorescence and the fruit. The photographs are generally of high quality and the only unease I feel with the reproduction is the yellow tones tend

rather too much toward orange – very disturbing if you are familiar with a species characterised by a very particular colour range.

I suggest that you buy this book, not just for its usefulness, but for the same reason that you would look at or grow everlastings – for the pleasure of it.

Helen Vonow
State Herbarium of South Australia

ABRS Report

Staffing

ABRS has a number of new staff, resulting from our restructure.

Ms Robyn Lawrence has taken up the position of Database Manager. Her role will be to expedite the delivery of ABRS database products, which now constitute an increasing part of our output. In the first instance she will be heavily involved in management of the ABIF-Fauna databases, which will be transferred from an Access platform to Oracle. She will also be working with Helen Thompson to expedite the delivery of *Flora of Australia On-line*, a project which is expected to go live within weeks. Further down the track we hope that Robyn will also become involved in our interactive key program.

As mentioned last issue, Mr Philip Hodgson has been recruited temporarily as Business Manager. He will manage the financial side of ABRS, including the Participatory Program. His appointment runs until June 2003.

Dr Mohammed Iqbal has joined ABRS as Information Officer, from 25 November. Iqbal has a range of skills, from insect taxonomy to Website development. He will be undertaking a range of tasks, including management of sales of ABRS publications and loading of the ABRS website. In the latter area he will be working closely with Virginnia Du Toit, our Graphic Designer, who is undertaking a complete redesign of ABRS online.

Of interest to ASBS is the news that additional resources are being allocated in ABRS to speed up delivery of the remaining grass volumes of *Flora of Australia*. Two part time editors, Mrs Jenny Bleyerveen and Mr Gil Garcon have been appointed, and will be with us into next year. We hope that with this boost we should be able to deliver the remaining 3 volumes at the rate of about one a year over the next 3 years.

Publications

Mosses of Norfolk Island by Heinar Streimann was published by ABRS on 18 October and is available from ABRS (Publications), GPO Box 787, Canberra ACT 2601 for \$52.80 including GST and surface postage. It is one of very few handbooks currently available for Australian bryophytes, and contains full accounts of all 69 species from the island. It has numerous habit and anatomical drawings, colour photographs and maps, as well as all the kinds of information expected in a Flora.

A useful companion to the above is *Key to the Genera of Australian Mosses* by W.R.Buck, D.H.Vitt & W.M.Malcolm, also published by ABRS, for \$49.50 including postage and GST. This spiral-bound, 120 page booklet provides a key, 50-80 word descriptions of each genus, and almost 700 colour illustrations of Australian moss genera.

Currently in press is a third book on Australian mosses: *Catalogue of Australian Mosses* by Heinar Streimann & Niels Klazenga. Numerous taxonomic revisions and a substantial amount of additional floristic information have become available since the publication of Streimann & Curnow's *Catalogue of Mosses of Australia and its External Territories* in 1989. Monographs of Australian families and genera have included descriptions of many new taxa and the reduction of an even larger number of names to synonymy. Moreover, many taxa have been newly reported from Australia, while other Australian records have proved to be based on misidentifications or could not otherwise be confirmed. Taxonomic revisions from other regions have also resulted in many name changes among Australian taxa, and floristic research has provided numerous new State and Territory records. This book documents the changes that have occurred between March 1987 (the deadline for inclusion in the original Catalogue) and September 2002. The new Catalogue includes 1074 accepted names with

their publication details, and more than 3000 synonyms. The book is B5, 259 pages, and costs \$33 including surface postage and GST. Order from ABRS (Publications).

ABRS has just completed publication of the largest monograph to date in the *Species Plantarum* series, a global account of the important wetland family Juncaceae. It appears in 3 B5 soft cover volumes, a total of 789 pages, describing, keying and illustrating over 500 species. For most countries, including Australia, it represents the first national account of Juncaceae in over a century. The volumes are available from ABRS (Publications) for A\$170 the set, including GST and surface postage.

In December ABRS, in conjunction with the Plant Biodiversity Centre, Adelaide, will be sending to press the final part in Bryan Womersley's blockbuster *Marine Benthic Flora of Southern Australia*, Part 3D, covering the remaining taxa of the Rhodophyta. This final part will also be the largest, with nearly 550 pages. This work has been one of the great scientific achievements in Australian botany, extending over half a century, and entirely dependent on the drive and enthusiasm of one man. We hope to arrange, with the Plant Biodiversity Centre, an appropriate recognition of the completion of this magnificent piece of work.

Tony Orchard

Marking the Robert Brown bicentenary

Celebrations in Far North Queensland

The celebrations marking the bicentenary of the *Investigator* voyage moved to Far North Queensland in late October. As in other areas, David Mabberley's public lectures on Brown and Bauer have provided one of the focal points. Throughout the bicentenary, the Australian Systematic Botany Society in association with the Austrian Embassy, has been keen to ensure that the science of the voyage, in particular the botanical work of Robert Brown and the art of Ferdinand Bauer, did not go unrecognised as the nation marked the first circumnavigation of the continent. The lectures have been a tremendous success. In summarising the first lecture in the series held in Albany last December, Robyn Barker [*Austral. Syst. Bot. Soc. Nsltr* 109:29] suggested that David had set himself a high standard for the rest of the lectures around Australia. Having been fortunate to have been in Albany and later in Sydney for the Robert Brown 200 conference in May [*Austral. Syst. Bot. Soc. Nsltr* 111:22-23], I can assure members that the standard has certainly not diminished nor has David's enthusiasm for the task he is willingly undertaking on behalf of the Society and the Austrian Embassy. In the 12 days he spent in the Far North, David travelled several thousand kilometres from Townsville in the south to Weipa in the north and on the way delivered 5 lectures in venues as diverse as a grand meeting room in a major conference centre to outdoors under the stars on the banks of the Pennefather River within sight of a Brown landing site.

The first lecture was held in the Great Gallery of the Museum of Tropical Queensland in Townsville on Saturday October 26. Amongst other things, the Museum of Tropical Queensland is noted for its work on the recovery, restoration and curation of artefacts from the wreck of HMS *Pandora*. The *Pandora* sank in 1791 when it struck a reef while looking for a passage through the Endeavour Straits off the tip of Cape York Peninsula. On board at the time were 14 seamen who were being returned to England to face trial for their part in the mutiny on HMS *Bounty*. David delivered his lecture beneath an imposing, full-scale reconstruction of the bow section of the *Pandora*. Although the *Pandora* was a frigate and, at 35m in length, about 4m longer than the sloop *Investigator*, the reconstruction provided a particularly fitting backdrop for the talk so intimately linked to an historic sailing ship. Close to one hundred people heard David weave the life and work of Brown and Bauer into a marvellously informative and entertaining lecture. From Townsville it was on to Cairns where the lecture was equally well received with 70 people turning up on a Monday evening. Cairns has an Austrian Consulate and the consul Mr Paul Kamsler was to have introduced David's talk but unfortunately at the last minute health problems prevented him doing so.

Next came a two day drive almost two thirds of the way up Cape York Peninsula to the Pennefather River on the west coast just north of Weipa to join a scientific expedition organised by

the Royal Geographical Society of Queensland. The Pennefather (the Coen River of Brown specimens and Flinders' charts) was the site of the only landings by Brown on the mainland of Cape York Peninsula. The expedition had been timed to coincide with the anniversary of the *Investigator's* visit. The expedition team comprised about 20 entomologists, zoologists, ornithologists and a geomorphologist supported by members of RGSQ. David Mabberley and I filled the roles of "botanical gentlemen". The plant studies had two primary foci. The first was to use Flinders' log, Brown's diary and recent air photographs and satellite imagery to locate the landing sites. This had been done for the transcription of Brown's diary [*Nature's Investigator: The Diary of Robert Brown in Australia 1801-1805*. ABRIS: Canberra] but this time a boat was available and the sites could be reached and checked on the ground. The Pennefather is several hundred metres wide at its mouth and there are plenty of crocodiles. The two sites visited by Brown and his party lie on the north side of the river. While several plant collectors have visited the readily accessible south bank, herbarium records suggest no collections have been made from the north shore since Brown. Everything fell into place nicely and I think the sites have been located with a high level of confidence. This was helped by the work of David Gillieson, a geomorphologist from James Cook University in Cairns, who found evidence that the places where the landing sites are thought to have been located have been stable for several hundred years.

Brown, together with Bauer and Flinders, spent one day at the Pennefather - Saturday, 6 November 1802. They left the *Investigator*, which was anchored about 3 miles off shore, at 8 am and rowed towards the mouth of the river. Brown and Flinders claim they returned to the ship at 3 pm having gone ashore twice in Brown's words "about a mile within the entrance and afterwards a very little way within". The gardener Peter Good, who had remained on board the *Investigator*, claimed the shore party did not return until about 4 pm. Regardless of whether it was 3 or 4 pm when they got back, the botanists would have had only 2 or 3 hours to collect for Flinders' account states they did not go ashore for the first time until about noon. Brown compiled a plant list for the area which is preserved with his diary in the British Museum. This list, which was reproduced by Tom Vallance and his co-authors in *Nature's Investigator*, records 56 plants seen by Brown and his party at the two landing sites. David Moore, one of the authors of *Nature's Investigator*, also provided transcriptions of the original labels from Brown's Pennefather specimens held by the British Museum. There

was a fair degree of overlap between Brown's plant list and the collections at the BM. All up the final list of plants totalled 63. The second focus of the plant study was to locate these plants. This could be expected to be a fairly straight forward exercise considering the vegetation is probably largely as it was 200 years ago except not all of the names used by Brown are in current use while some were never published and others were short descriptive phrases probably coined by Brown as a memory prompt. It proved to be an interesting challenge and some of the puzzles which remained after the publication of Brown's diary transcription were solved. One or two remain and work continues on unravelling these. A publication on the findings is being prepared.

While at the Pennefather David spoke on Brown and Bauer to what is probably the smallest audience of the lecture tour but certainly in the most evocative locality - in the open air, right on the banks of the Pennefather River, within site of the Brown landing sites. While the lectures in some of the southern cities such as Albany and Sydney were held indoors in sight of places Brown visited, at the Pennefather the view across the river to the north shore remains just as it was 200 years ago.

On the last day of the visit to the Pennefather a small group of students from the Weipa campus of the Western Cape College arrived to spend some time with the botanists and other expedition members. RGSQ tries to maintain strong links with schools throughout Queensland. Most of the students had never met a scientist and I don't think any had heard of Brown and Bauer.

Time was limited and commitments elsewhere meant that only 4 days could be spent at the Pennefather. While this was considerably longer than Brown and the others had there, it was a pity to have to leave before the others celebrated the actual anniversary on November 6, especially as the aboriginal traditional owners of the Pennefather area were to arrive later in the week. It would have been interesting to hear their views on the visit of the *Investigator* and to see if stories of the Flinders' visit had been incorporated into their oral tradition. Brown and the others saw several aboriginal people at the Pennefather although as Flinders pointed out "all our endeavours to bring about an interview were unsuccessful".

On Saturday evening David delivered his lecture at the Hibberd Centre in Weipa. The State Library of New South Wales travelling exhibition *Matthew Flinders: The Ultimate Voyage* opened at the centre on the same day. Weipa, a town of



Clockwise from top left. a. David Gillieson, John Clarkson, Betsy Jackes and David Mabberley stand beneath the full-scale reconstruction of the bow section of HMS *Pandora* at the Museum of Tropical Queensland (Ph. Marion Clarkson). b. The lecture at the Pennefather was within sight of the Brown landing sites (Ph. John Clarkson). c. A group of students from the Western Cape High School in Weipa joined the RGSQ expedition at the Pennefather for a day (Ph. John Clarkson). d. Some of the 100 people who came to hear David Mabberley speak in ...

approximately 2,500, people is the site of the world's largest bauxite mine. The Investigator passed within view of present day Weipa on Monday November 8. Flinders noted in his journal the next day that the coast was "remarkable for having some reddish cliffs". The colour was of course the bauxite which remained undiscovered until 1955.

The final lecture, the third in four days, was held in Cooktown on Monday, November 4. By the time the *Investigator* past this part of the Queensland coast, Flinders, fearful of the fate which had befallen Cook in the *Endeavour* some 22 years before, had taken her through the Barrier Reef into open water. The closest the *Investigator* got to Cooktown was about 400 km to the east. Why then ask David to speak on Brown and Bauer here? There are several links between the voyages of the *Endeavour* and the *Investigator*. The obvious one is the *Endeavour's* botanist Joseph Banks. Once he returned to England his patronage and influence were all important to the voyage of the *Investigator*. Brown and Bauer were personally selected for the voyage by Banks. Brown also had with him on the *Investigator* a study set of plants amongst which were undoubtedly plants collected by Banks at Cooktown. David also has had a long association with the Sir Joseph Banks Archive in London and has been its honorary director since 1996. He needed little encouragement when asked if Cooktown could be added to his itinerary. The locals showed their support and over 50 turned out to hear David deliver the

lecture in Nature's Powerhouse in the town's historic botanic gardens.

Driving long distances and delivering public lectures on Brown and Bauer did not consume all of David's time. There was time to catch a teasing glimpse of the diversity which abounds in the Far North, to visit a vineyard to see Isabella grapes for the first time in Australia, to become reacquainted with some of the Meliaceae he had worked on many years ago and to be introduced to a couple of new species in the QRS herbarium. There was also time meet some very interesting people who appreciated not being left out of the celebration of the bicentenary. I am sure David was glad to get back to a less hectic life in Sydney.

I would like to acknowledge the continued cooperation of the Austrian Embassy which has supported this project from its inception. The extremely generous financial support received from James Cook University for the Far North Queensland leg deserves special mention. Professor David Gillieson from the School of Tropical Environmental Studies and Geography embraced the project enthusiastically the first time I discussed the matter with him and he organised the support with no prompting on my part. Thank you David. Last but not least the Society's thanks must go to David Mabberley who has given so much of his time to the bicentenary celebrations.

John Clarkson
Mareeba

Coming celebrations in Darwin

It is anticipated that David Mabberley will present a single lecture in the theatre at the Museum and Art Gallery of the Northern Territory in Darwin in the last two weeks of February.

It is likely to be a single lecture on both Brown and Bauer, along the lines of the talks in Far North Queensland.

John Clarkson
Mareeba

... Townsville. (Ph. Marion Clarkson). e, The Mayor of Cooktown, Bob Sullivan (right) introduced David's lecture in Cooktown. Bob is pictured with his wife Loretta and David in suitably tropical garb (Ph. Marion Clarkson). f, (Saint) Paul Gadek chats to some of the 70 people who listened to the lecture in Cairns. Far right is ASBS member Barbara Waterhouse of Mareeba. Note the halo! (Ph. Marion Clarkson). g, David Mabberley and John Clarkson with armfuls of plants at one of Brown's Pennefather landing sites. JC holds a specimen of *Drynaria quercifolia* one the species collected by Brown (Ph. David Gillieson). h, RGSQ expedition members wade ashore at one of Brown's landing sites at the Pennefather River (Ph. John Clarkson).

Conference Report

Evolution of the Australian Biota

Australian Institute of Biology (AIBiol) Annual Conference September 23rd – 24th 2002, University of Adelaide, South Australia.

The conference brought together a small group of speakers from across Australia discussing issues central to the theme of the evolution of the Australian biota. In the informal, friendly atmosphere seminars encompassed diverse topics such as palaeontology, biogeography, faunal evolutionary adaptations, floral development and systematics. Posters addressed themes covering evolution of the environment utilising palaeobotanical evidence and systematics and flora adaptations, among other interesting things. There were several very impressive talks based on recent studies by promising young scientists entering this field.

Highlights included the presentation by Roger Seymour of lotus flowers being analogous to night clubs for their insect pollinators. This inspired several interested parties to visit the Nymph pond in the adjacent Botanic Gardens, only to find that the lotus had finished flowering and were less than impressive.

The excursion to the Mt Lofty Botanic Gardens for an afternoon was also enjoyable as well as being highly informative. Conference delegates were given the opportunity to provide feedback to the Gardens on the new Gondwana trail, which exhibited many thriving plants arranged according to region. These regions included a New Zealand gully dominated by podocarps and *Nothofagus* and a Proteaceae-dominated African section. It promises to be an educational asset to the Gardens as well as being a crowd-pleaser. In a different part of the Gardens a small unassuming Wollemi Pine was sadly sequestered behind a cage for its own protection.

One of the emphases of the conference was on making current research in this field accessible to high school teachers and students and to this end a very innovative, audience-interactive session about cloning of *Thylacine* was held. The forum was used to create awareness of the complexity of issues relating to cloning. Interestingly, for a scientific conference, the feasibility of cloning was not addressed *per se*, but the issues arising if cloning were viable were discussed as part of role-play and made for a thought-provoking experience.

The Annual General Meeting for the ASBS was held after the conference, in competition with the AIBiol AGM, but a quorum was attained and the important constitutional changes were sent on their way to the membership to assess. After this process of deciding to discuss the issue we were all exhausted and went out for a nice dinner on the town in Adelaide.

The catering for the whole conference was much appreciated, particularly by the poor student-types who were spoilt by the biscuits several times a day and lunches in cute boxes.

We'd like to thank the efforts of the organisers in compiling such an event and also for shortening the conference by a day so we could hang out and see the sights of Adelaide!

Ann Bohte and Christina Flann
School of Botany
The University of Melbourne.

New Book

Vegetation of New Zealand by Peter Wardle returns to print

Vegetation of New Zealand by Peter Wardle, ISBN 1-903665-58-X, Hardcover, 682 pages, \$US89.95

Originally published in 1991, *Vegetation of New Zealand* by Peter Wardle offers a comprehensive

description of that country's unique flora and highly diverse vegetation. The text, supported by over 300 photographs, maps and diagrams, has made an outstanding contribution to the understanding of the biology of these islands. The

Blackburn Press has returned the book to print with a new preface by the author.

With its isolation from other lands, its latitudes extending from subtropical to sub-Antarctic, and its long evolutionary history, New Zealand has a vegetation of interest to botanists, foresters, ecologists and conservationists world-wide.

Chapters 1-4 describe the New Zealand environment, flora and fauna; and they discuss the origins, relationships, life forms and reproductive aspects of the indigenous vegetation. Chapter 5 is a synopsis of vegetation types, habitat classes and environmental processes; it serves also to define the terms in which these are described in the book. Chapter 6 contains an outline of the geographic divisions of the country. Chapters 7-9 offer expanded descriptions of plant communities, preceded where appropriate by information on their structure and characteristic species and genera. The concluding chapters discuss ecological functions and processes.

Vegetation of New Zealand is an essential book for botanists, ecologists, conservationists and

many others who love New Zealand's plants, animals and landscapes.

- "The breadth of scholarship displayed by Peter Wardle is impressive. The book as a whole is remarkably readable; testimony to that comes from this reviewer, who read all 672 pages in one day and was still captivated at the end!" - *Annals of Botany*
- "This is a great book and a major achievement by the author. It will be a source book for many years to come." - *Vegetation*
- "This book is a magnificent successor to Cockayne's *Vegetation of New Zealand*." - *Biological Conservation*

The Blackburn Press is a relatively new publishing company, founded with the mission of keeping in print and available for purchase at reasonable prices book titles that larger publishers have lost interest in and have declared to be "out of print." It specializes in scientific and technical books and textbooks that are classics in their field.

Andrea Herbert
The Blackburn Press
<http://www.BlackburnPress.com>

Federation of Australian Scientific & Technological Societies (FASTS)

National Priorities: Towards a National Vision

Australia's Peak Council for scientists and technologists welcomed the national research priorities released today by the Prime Minister.

Vice-President of the Federation of Australian Scientific and Technological Societies, Dr David Denham said, "The national research priorities underline the importance of science in Australian society. For some time FASTS has been calling for a national vision to shape the research directions of this country. The national research priorities are an important first step towards this vision".

"Australia needs a national plan for science to make us internationally competitive, while safeguarding the heritage of this continent and enhancing the quality of life for our population," he said.

The national priorities for An Environmentally Sustainable Australia, for Promoting and

Maintaining Good Health, for Frontier Technologies for Building and Transforming Australian Industries, and for Safeguarding Australia are consistent with the FASTS national research priorities submission to:

- Enable a sustainable environment
- Provide healthy lives and a long life expectancy for all Australians
- Overcome Australia's tyranny of distance
- Create an energy efficient Australia

Dr Denham said that "The implementation of the national priorities within budgetary constraints presents a significant challenge for government because all the research priorities identified are important and require commensurate funding."

"We particularly welcome the recognition of breakthrough science as a general priority, because it is well known that fundamental research produces unexpected benefits that often aren't realised until decades after the initial breakthrough. It is therefore important not to limit the horizons for basic research by being too prescriptive."

"However, we would expect that the national priorities will provide more direct guidance for planning by government research agencies which engage in applied and strategic research. FASTS looks forward to contributing to the discussion on implementing these research priorities", he said.

Dr David Denham
Vice-President, FASTS

From the FASTS news of November – ASBS did not have representatives attending this meeting this year, but here is the report from the FASTS newsletter together with the list of key issues raised by Federal parliamentarians.

Science Meets Parliament: November 2002

"Science meets Parliament" Day has once again proven to be a wonderful opportunity for 154 scientists and technologists to put the case for science to the 128 MPs who agreed to participate. Among the science and research issues currently being considered by Parliament are the Higher Education Review, priority research areas and triennium funding for Government-funded research agencies. These are matters where the science community has wellconsidered views. The event generated good radio and newspaper coverage.

Tuesday 12 Nov. The National Press Club lunch was eloquently addressed by Dr Keith Williams, CEO of Proteome Systems Ltd. His company has rapidly expanded to be one of the world forces in proteomics, and employs about 60 PhD graduates. Lunch was followed by a comprehensive Briefing Session for the scientists. Lord Robert May, President of the Royal Society, Robin Batterham, Chief Government Scientist, John Tierney from the Liberal Party, ALP Science spokesperson Kim Carr, Senator Natasha Stott Despoja, the Speaker of the House and the President of the Senate all contributed to an informative afternoon. Education Minister Brendan Nelson, and Science Minister Peter McGauran hosted a Cocktail Reception at Parliament House.

Wednesday 13 Nov. After breakfast at Old Parliament House, society representatives

commenced the rounds of appointments with MPs which continued through-out the day. There was a meeting with the Leader of the Opposition Simon Crean, a Press Conference given by a panel of young scientists and morning tea hosted by the Science Minister Peter McGauran. A new feature this year was a special dinner in the dignified and atmospheric Members' Dining Room at Old Parliament House, with guests drawn from participating scientists, from business and industry, and from selected Members of Parliament. The after-dinner speaker was Mr Bob Herbert, CEO of the Australian Industry Group. This dinner was arranged as an optional extra for participants wishing to build dialogue with MPs and industry.

Thursday 14 Nov. FASTS held the 2002 Annual General Meeting, Council Meeting and Board Meeting. The President-elect for 2003/2005 is Professor Snow Barlow, Head of the School of Agricultural and Food Systems, University of Melbourne. Assoc. Prof. John Rice was re-elected as Treasurer, and Assoc. Prof. John O'Connor was elected as Secretary.

Key issues raised by federal Parliamentarians in 2002

These are ranked in importance from 1 to 21:

1. Salinity
2. Water quality
3. Energy sources of the future
4. Education & training – school, university and industry
5. Commercialisation, innovation, industry research
6. Climate, climate change, greenhouse
7. Agriculture, agribusiness
8. Sustainability & the triple bottom line
9. Environment & biodiversity
10. Health & medical issues
11. Science in the local electorate
12. Emerging technologies – nanotechnology, photonics, bioinformatics
13. Medical & agricultural biotechnology: benefits & risks
14. Broadband, Telstra & the bush
15. Brain drain, recruiting
16. Oceans & the Great Barrier Reef
17. Stem cells, tissue engineering
18. Nuclear power & storage – disposal of radioactive waste
19. Mining, resource industries & exploration
20. Defence science & biosecurity
21. Feral animals, noxious weeds & quarantine.

Test your identification skills

Sandbox tree in the Northern Territory

Andrew Mitchell, Darwin

In July 2002 I received a scan of a very large “seedpod”, 7 cm wide, from the AQIS science people in Brisbane, asking me if I knew the identity of the plant that produced this fruit. AQIS inspectors had taken it from a passenger who had come from Papua New Guinea. I didn’t know it so I forwarded the photo on to taxonomists such as Bill Barker and Barry Conn, who I knew had worked in Papua New Guinea, without result. Someone suggested that it was an *Abutilon* but nothing was convincing. Finally someone placed a request for identification on the *Pacific Pestnet* list server from where the **big** man of Pacific botany, Art Whistler, identified it as a fruit of the sandbox tree (*Hura crepitans*).

This tree is a member of the Euphorbiaceae and its natural distribution is the lowlands Caribbean, Central and Southern America. Its common name is derived from the use of dried immature fruits, which were historically used to contain sand for drying ink. It is a poisonous plant. Its voluminous sap is used to tip poison arrows and if animals eat the foliage they can die. It is used as a medicine and is also grown for its timber. It has become a weed in Hawaii, Vietnam, Tanzania and Madagascar. Could it be in Papua New Guinea too? Probably! I thought that was the end of the story.

At a party in Darwin in August 2002 I renewed acquaintance with Piers Barrow; Piers used to work for the NT Weeds Branch and is now half way through a Ph.D. We were talking about weeds and he asked me whether the NT Weeds Branch had managed to eradicate *Hura crepitans* at Middle Point. This was the first time I had

heard that *H. crepitans* had been present in the Northern Territory, but my interest was triggered because of the previous incident. I told Piers I would find out. Piers told me that *H. crepitans* had been planted as part of a forestry trial plot at Middle Point. In the late 1980s it had spread into the adjacent rainforest (next to Fogg Dam) and a decision was made to eradicate it in 1989. In 1993 no more seedlings were seen and it was thought it had been eradicated.

I asked people who knew of the plant's location, Ian Miller and Beau Robertson, if they would take me to the site to see if there were any plants left. This was agreed to, so on 9 October we set off with Graham Schultz and Nick Hartley into the rainforest adjacent to Fogg Dam at Middle Point. Graham had been in charge of the original eradication.

The forestry introduction site (EP 361) was established in 1971/72 at Fogg Dam and slopes gently from a dry, well-drained area to permanently damp low ground adjacent to the dam. According to Beau, the *Hura* did not persist on the better-drained area, but did well and spread on the lower parts of the plot. Going through the plot there was no *H. crepitans* in the drier area but when we reached the lowest part we found one tree that had a basal diameter of 0.5 m and was 10 m tall. We then found many juvenile trees. They are easy to detect in the rainforest, unlike some rainforest trees, because they have a heavily armoured trunk with spines that are up to 3 cm long and 1 cm wide at the base.

View from above, on left, and from below of the fruits of *Hura crepitans*, which are about 7 cm wide.

Ph. A. Mitchell.



Two weeks later, Graham, Beau and a team went down and cut them down and painted the stumps with herbicide to kill them. A yearly inspection will have to be made for at least 10 years to eradicate this species.

Please keep an eye out for new exotic species that 'pop up' from nowhere. Herbaria are usually the first port of call for members of the public with plants they cannot identify and sometimes these plants are the first record of an exotic. If you cannot identify them, pass them on to someone who can and if identified as a new weed, inform the Department that administers weed management in your State. The invasion of Australia by alien species is bad enough without letting more become established through lack of lasting positive action. Sometimes they can be

eradicated, sometimes not, but it's even worse to sit on our hands and ignore what's going on. There are some very active weed groups around the country who are willing to tackle such problems.

Further background information and pictures of this plant can be found at:

- <http://ctfs.si.edu/webatlas/english/huracr.html> – Trees of the Panama Canal area
- <http://waynesword.palomar.edu/ww0901c.htm> – background to the use of the plant – the fruits were used to hold sand for blotting purposes before paper was used for this purpose (hence sandbox tree), good pictures of the flowers and fruits and their use in making jewellery.

History of Officers of ASBS Inc.

Incorporation and the Public Officer: additional notes

The last issue of the *Newsletter* included reference to holders of office with the Society. Additional information has been located

Incorporation

The Society was incorporated on 14th October 1986 through an announcement in the Public Notices of the *Canberra Times* (*Austral. Syst. Bot. Soc. Nsltr* 49 (1986): 13).

Public Officers

In the previous newsletter we only listed Public Officers from 1992. The same brief note on incorporation indicated that Mike Crisp was the inaugural Public Officer, commencing on the same date. It was a requirement of incorporation. He served in this role until the 29th March 1992, when Jeremy Bruhl took over. Jeremy had a short time in office, before handing over to Andrew Lyne on 4th August 1992.

The Public Officer must be a resident of the ACT since the Society is incorporated there and he/she is primarily the communication channel between

the Society and the Registrar General's Office in the ACT. The Public Officer is expected to hold a watching brief on the activities of the Society and draw to the attention of the relevant members of Council the necessity to comply with the regulations of the *Association Incorporations Act 1991*. Note that the Public Officer is not a member of Council but is appointed by Council to perform this independent role.

Notices of changes to the Council, changes to the Rules of the Society, and submission of an Annual Return Form to the Registrar General's Office, all within defined times, are duties of the Public Officer. Failure to adhere to these requirements costs the Society in penalty fees.

The history of Officers of the Society, amended to account for this additional information, has now been placed on the Society's Web pages.

Robyn and Bill Barker
State Herbarium of South Australia

ASBS Publications

History of Systematic Botany in Australia

Edited by P.S. Short. A4, case bound, 326pp. ASBS, 1990. \$10; plus \$10 p. & p.

For all those people interested in the 1988 ASBS symposium in Melbourne, here are the proceedings. It is a very nicely presented volume, containing 36 papers on: the botanical exploration of our region; the role of horticulturists, collectors and artists in the early documentation of the flora; the renowned (Mueller, Cunningham), and those whose contribution is sometimes overlooked (Buchanan, Wilhelmi).

Systematic Status of Large Flowering Plant Genera

ASBS Newsletter Number 53, edited by Helen Hewson. 1987. \$5 + \$1.10 postage.

This Newsletter issue includes the reports from the February 1986 Boden Conference on the "Systematic Status of Large Flowering Plant Genera". The reports cover: the genus concept; the role of cladistics in generic delimitation; geographic range and the genus concepts; the value of chemical characters, pollination syndromes, and breeding systems as generic determinants; and generic concepts in the Asteraceae, Chenopodiaceae, Epacridaceae, *Cassia*, *Acacia*, and *Eucalyptus*.

Ecology of the Southern Conifers

Edited by Neal Enright and Robert Hill.

ASBS members: \$60 plus \$12 p&p non-members \$79.95.

Proceedings of a symposium at the ASBS conference in Hobart in 1993. Twenty-eight scholars from across the hemisphere examine the history and ecology of the southern conifers, and emphasise their importance in understanding the evolution and ecological dynamics of southern vegetation.

Australian Systematic Botany Society Newsletter

Back issues of the Newsletter are available from Number 27 (May 1981) onwards, excluding Numbers 29 and 31. Here is the chance to complete your set. Cover prices are \$3.50 (Numbers 27-59, excluding Number 53) and \$5.00 (Number 53, and 60 onwards). Postage \$1.10 per issue.

Send orders and remittances (payable to "ASBS Inc.") to:

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Canberra, ACT 2601, Australia

Evolution of the Flora and Fauna of Arid Australia

Edited by W.R. Barker & P.J.M. Greenslade. ASBS & A.N.Z.A.A.S., 1982. \$20 + \$5 postage.

This collection of more than 40 papers will interest all people concerned with Australia's dry inland, or the evolutionary history of its flora and fauna. It is of value to those studying both arid lands and evolution in general. Six sections cover: ecological and historical background; ecological and reproductive adaptations in plants; vertebrate animals; invertebrate animals; individual plant groups; and concluding remarks.

Special arrangement. To obtain this discounted price, post a photocopy of this page with remittance to: Peacock Publications, 38 Sydenham Road, Norwood, SA 5069, Australia.

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These listings are published in each issue. Please inform us of any changes

AUSTRALIAN SYSTEMATIC BOTANY SOCIETY INCORPORATED

The Society

The *Australian Systematic Botany Society* is an incorporated association of over 300 people with professional or amateur interest in botany. The aim of the Society is to promote the study of plant systematics.

Membership

Membership is open to all those interested in plant systematics. Membership entitles the member to attend general meetings and chapter meetings, and to receive the Newsletter. Any person may apply for membership by filling in a "Membership Application" form and forwarding it, with the appropriate subscription, to the Treasurer. Subscriptions become due on January 1 each year.

The ASBS *annual membership subscription* is \$40(Aust.); full-time students \$20. Please make cheques out to *Australian Systematic Botany Society Inc.*, and remit to the Treasurer. All changes of address should be sent directly to the Treasurer as well.

The Newsletter

The Newsletter appears quarterly, keeps members informed of Society events and news, and provides a vehicle for debate and discussion. In addition, original articles, notes and letters (not exceeding ten published pages in length) will be considered.

Contributions should be sent to the Editors at the address given below. They should *preferably* be submitted as: (1) an MS-DOS file in the form of a text file (.txt extension), (2) an MS-Word 97 or earlier version .doc file, (3) a Rich-text-format or .rtf file. Send on an MS-DOS disk or as an email message or attachment. *Non-preferred* media such as handwritten or typescripts by letter or fax are acceptable, but may cause delay in publication in view of the extra work-load involved. Contact the Editors on *images*; their inclusion may depend on space being available.

The *deadline* for contributions is the last day of February, May, August and November. All items incorporated in the Newsletter will be duly acknowledged. Any unsigned articles are attributable to the Editors.

Authors alone are responsible for the views expressed, and statements made by the authors do not necessarily represent the views of the *Australian Systematic Botany Society Inc.* Newsletter items should not be reproduced without the permission of the author of the material.

Advertising

Advertising space is available for products or services of interest to ASBS members. The current fee is \$100 per full page, \$50 per half-page or less.

Fliers may be approved for inclusion in the envelope for products or services of interest to ASBS members. The current fee is \$100 per flyer, plus the cost of inserting them (usually roughly \$25-30). Fliers are not part of the Newsletter and do not appear with the Newsletter on the ASBS Web site.

A 20% discount applies for second and subsequent entries of the same advertisement. Advertisements from ASBS members are usually exempt from fees but not the insertion costs in the case of a flier. Contact the Newsletter Editors for further information.

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Contents

Australian Systematic Botany Society Newsletter 113 (December 2002)

ASBS Inc. business	
The ballot on changes to the Society's rules	1
Membership Fees 2003	1
ASBS President's Report	1
Minutes of the 2002 Annual General Meeting of the Australian Systematic Botany Society, Inc.....	3
<i>ASBS Newsletter Report (2002)</i>	3
<i>ASBS Web-site Report (2002)</i>	4
Treasurer's Report	5
News	
More changes in Adelaide.....	12
Kew Library Catalogue goes on-line	12
Editorial	12
Articles	
<i>Banksia alpina</i> Wilhelmi – a nomen nudum, a nomen subnudum, or a valid name?	13
The discovery of <i>Stockwellia</i> (Myrtaceae).....	15
More memories of Alice Springs	17
Eichler Research Fund Report	
Systematics of <i>Euchiton</i> (Gnaphalieae: Asteraceae) with a focus on Australia and New Zealand	18
Obituary	
Carrie Michell	19
Retirement	
Rod Henderson of the Queensland Herbarium	20
CHAH Report	25
ABLO Report	27
Book review	
Everlasting Daisies of Australia: identification, propagation, cultivation.....	28
ABRS Report	29
Marking the Robert Brown bicentenary	
Celebrations in Far North Queensland	30
Coming celebrations in Darwin	33
Conference Report	
Evolution of the Australian Biota	34
New Book	
<i>Vegetation of New Zealand</i> by Peter Wardle returns to print.....	34
Federation of Australian Scientific & Technological Societies (FASTS)	35
Test your identification skills	
Sandbox tree in the Northern Territory	37
History of Officers of ASBS Inc.	
Incorporation and the Public Officer: additional notes	38
ASBS Publications	39
ASBS Chapter Conveners	40
Contacting Major Australian Herbaria and Systematics Institutions	40