



*Abelmoschus moschatus ssp tuberosus*

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# The Native Gardener

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Newsletter of the  
Society for Growing Australian Plants  
Townsville Branch Inc.  
PO Box 363, Aitkenvale, Qld. 4814.

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General Meeting Wednesday 14<sup>th</sup> October 8.00pm  
Annandale Community Centre

Committee Meeting Monday 26<sup>th</sup> October 7.30pm  
Tumbetin Lodge

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Our speaker for this meeting will be

## **Don Glasgow on “Plants I have Grown”**

Don has decades of experience in growing native plants (and a few non-natives) on his large parcel of land on the Upper Ross.

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### **Outing to be determined at the meeting**

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<b>Chair</b>	Janice Lough	4728 7302	<a href="mailto:j.lough@aims.gov.au">j.lough@aims.gov.au</a>
<b>Vice Chair</b>	Rex Grattidge	4729 0270	<a href="mailto:rgr57487@bigpond.net.au">rgr57487@bigpond.net.au</a>
<b>Secretary</b>	John Elliott	4728 7302	<a href="mailto:jw-elliott@aapt.net.au">jw-elliott@aapt.net.au</a>
<b>Treasurer</b>	Keith Townsend	4755 2098	<a href="mailto:noeltownsend@bigpond.com">noeltownsend@bigpond.com</a>
<b>Newsletter Ed.</b>	Iris Dodd		<a href="mailto:iris@y7mail.com">iris@y7mail.com</a>
<b>Librarian</b>	Rex Grattidge	4729 0270	<a href="mailto:rgr57487@bigpond.net.au">rgr57487@bigpond.net.au</a>
<b>Committee</b>	Greg Calvert		<a href="mailto:gregor_calvert@hotmail.com">gregor_calvert@hotmail.com</a>

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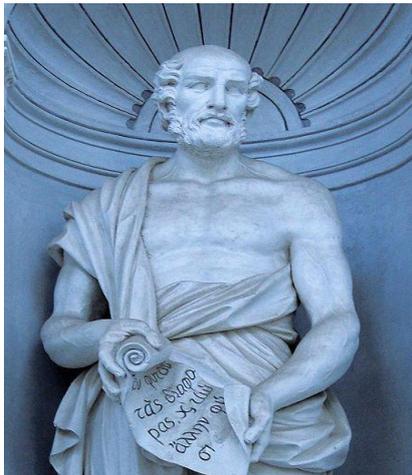
## ***A History of Botanical Nomenclature***

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Scientific botanical names are often a source of concern to many, particularly new, SGAP members. The problem seems to emanate from the fact that most are of Latin, Greek or Roman derivation, and we seem to have an inbuilt firewall that tells us that because of this we really cannot handle the situation.

They are, however, just words; and the talk I gave recently was an attempt to help understand how the present system developed. As mentioned at the time, the theme and much of the outline came from an article which appeared in *Australian Plants Online*; and to this I added some photographs and notes to help set the scene for the times we were talking about.

The first player involved was a Greek, Theophrastus, who recognised the difference between monocots and dicots, and became known as the Father of Botany. He lived from 371BC to 287BC, studied under Plato and Aristotle and later became head of the Lyceum.



*Theophrastus*

Next we came to Pedanius Dioscorides, again a Greek physician, botanist and herbalist, who lived from 40 – 90AD. He wrote a book *De Materia Medica*, about medicinal plants, and grouped plants mainly according to their medicinal properties. His book, and work by Theophrastus, was in use for many centuries.

It may seem quite unbelievable in our present way of thinking that a book could be in use for many centuries, but the world (or at least the known European and adjacent areas) was about to be influenced by major changes. These changes were brought about by the domination of the Roman Empire; where the whole area was either under direct control of Roman rulers or had been taken over by Roman armies. There followed many centuries where there

was little progress in botanic pursuits, and the Roman language, Latin, became the way that learned men communicated across other language barriers. Anyone seen to be challenging long-accepted dogma was likely to come to a very sticky end!

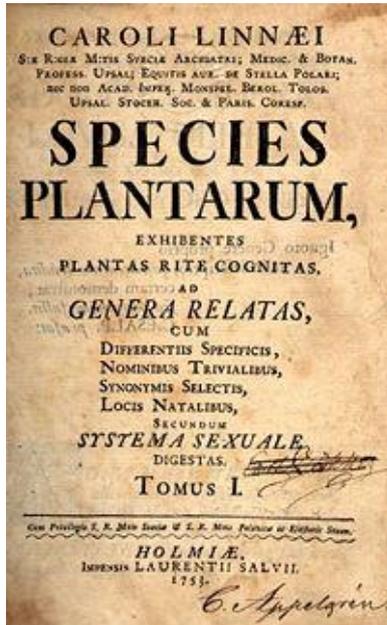
There was not a lot of progress until the 16<sup>th</sup> century, when a number of attempts were made to classify plants, and some useful herbal works were produced.

Around 1620 Caspar Bauhin, a Swiss physician, botanist and anatomist, produced a major work, *Pinax Theatri Botanici*, which described 6000 plants, classifying them roughly into groups such as trees, grasses and legumes. He introduced a concept similar to genus and species, which was later refined by Linnaeus.



Rudolf Jacob Camerarius, 1665 to 1721, a German botanist and physician, was the first to recognise the sexual nature of plants. He experimented with pollens and was able to show that fruit which had not been fertilized did not produce seeds. This was a major step forward in the understanding of plant physiology.

The person generally credited with creating the orderly system of plant naming which we know today was Swedish botanist Carl von Linne, 1707 - 1778. He was so deeply into Latin that he latinised his name to Carolus Linnaeus. In 1753 he published Species Plantarum (in Latin of course) and subsequently has become known as the Father of Taxonomy.



Linnaeus' work set the pattern for classification into Orders, Classes, Kingdoms etc. and he refined the genus and species concept first visualised by Bauhin. There have been minor changes of course over the years, but it was Linnaeus' work which resulted in the registration of pressed 'type' specimens and descriptions in Latin which are still necessary today. Botanist Robert Brown, who travelled widely in Australia with Matthew Flinders, was prominent in defining the Family level of classification (which he called 'Natural Orders').

Much recent work is largely centred around DNA analysis, which may prove or disprove the ancestral relationship of plants, and is resulting in many of the name changes and family changes which we see today.

The balance of my talk centred around examples of descriptive scientific names, the changes necessary when names are changed, and the accepted ways of writing the various examples.

We are now living in an era of instantaneous communications anywhere throughout the world; where almost anything we want can be found on the internet, but it is sometimes interesting to ponder on some of the steps which brought us to this situation.

Keith Townsend

## In Flower in September 2009

Bixaceae	<i>Cochlospermum gillivraei</i>
Myrtaceae	<i>Callistemon 'Howie's fireglow'</i> <i>Callistemon pachyphyllus</i> (red) <i>Callistemon uncinatum</i> <i>Eugenia reinwardtiana</i> <i>Syzygium 'pink cascade'</i>
Proteaceae	<i>Grevillea decora</i> <i>Grevillea 'Georgiana'</i> (grafted) <i>Grevillea 'honey gem'</i> <i>Grevillea sessilis</i>
Rutaceae	<i>Flindersia bourjotiana</i>

Jane McLean



*Eugenia reinwardtiana*



*Grevillea decora*

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## ***Darlingia darlingiana* – Proteaceae**

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### **Brown Silky Oak**

Flowering now in our region is this spectacular rainforest tree, famous for both its showy flowers and its dark, glossy, deeply lobed leaves. Its habitat ranges from Townsville to Cooktown and it can be found as close as Bluewater gorge. In the garden it will tolerate quite harsh conditions in full sun.



In optimum natural conditions this tree can grow to 30m, but will be much smaller in cultivation, growing in an attractive coppice like form so that the foliage is shown to full advantage.

The scientific name unusually records both genus and species after the same person, Charles Darling, (1809-1870), Governor of Victoria. He was the nephew of Sir Ralph Darling after whom Darling Harbour is named, but why a strictly NQ rainforest species is so entirely encumbered with his name is not immediately apparent. Can anyone help?

Wrigley/Fagg in their “Australian Native Plants” calls this “one of the finest trees from north Queensland”.

*John Elliott*

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## **Outing at AIMS, Cape Ferguson – 17<sup>th</sup> August 2009**

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Cape Ferguson is an ideal location to discover some of our mangroves as the plants are situated on the beach, so no gum boots are necessary to paddle in the mud!

Beth was our guide on the day and gave us a passionate and very informative talk about some of the mangroves found on our shores. Mangroves are found all over Australia, however the further north we go, the more species we’ll find, up to 34 species (and 3 naturally occurring hybrids) in Queensland, while on the southern Australian coast, only one species, *Avicennia marina* is present. Mangroves are fascinating plants that have adapted to a very harsh environment and are playing an essential role in keeping our sea clean while providing a habitat for a multitude and varied wildlife.

Most mangroves will do well if grown in freshwater; their strong presence on our seashores is simply due to the lack of competition from other plants. Mangroves adapted to a unique environment, where not only large fluctuations of salinity take place, but also freshwater (rain or floods), sudden water temperature changes, a soil with often low oxygen and constant nutrient supply changes. But once reached riverine environments further upstream or freshwater swamps the competition from other plants becomes a lot more serious and other plants slowly take over.

Thank you Beth for sharing your knowledge with us.

*Iris Dodd*



*Aegiceras corniculatum*, salt exudate on leaf and flowers.

**Society for Growing Australian Plants, Townsville Branch Inc.  
P.O. Box 363 Aitkenvale, Qld. 4814**

**Membership Application or Renewal Form**

Membership Year is from 1<sup>st</sup> April to 31<sup>st</sup> March  
(Initial half yearly membership is available for those joining around October)

Name: .....

Postal Address: .....

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Email address: .....

Fee: \$.....

If claiming full time student fee please quote Student No.....

Additional household members may be registered for a nominal fee of \$2.00 per person but they will not receive newsletters or magazines.

**Society for Growing Australian Plants Townsville Branch Inc ABN 32 302 397 597**

**Membership Fees:**

Ordinary Member	\$50.00
Student Member	\$40.00
Renewal	\$45.00
Renewal (Student)	\$35.00
New Member (Half Year from Oct. 08)	\$27.00
Additional Household Member	\$2.00
Australian Plants Journal only	\$21.00

<b>Committee Meetings 2009</b>	<b>General Meetings 2009</b>
26th Jan	11th Feb
23rd Feb	11th March
30th March	8th April
27th April	13th May
25th May	10th June
22nd June	8th July
27th July	12th August
24th August	9th September
28th September	14th October
26th October	11th November

**The Society for Growing Australian Plants promotes  
the conservation of Australian native flora  
by encouraging its introduction into gardens.**

