

MEPA NEWS



Volume 2, Number 11

August 2012

MEPA AGM
followed by a barbecue.
Saturday, 20 October, 12 midday
at the Mt Nebo Hall.

Strange behaviour

In our garden we have a mini "lawn" sporting ferns around the edges (*Hypolepis muelleri* - Harsh Ground Fern). The male Regent Bower Bird is attracted to these ferns. He descends to the ground and scrutinises the plants carefully, cocking his head. When he finds a suitable young frond with its tip still rolled up he pecks off the pea-like end before going on to find more. Once he has a beak full he flies off.



Our bird book has a photo of the bower, which resembles that of the Satin Bower Bird, with an avenue of vertical sticks. Apparently the male paints the walls yellow with saliva and juice of crushed leaves dabbed on with his bill. When you crush these green fern tips onto white paper the result is a yellow-green stain so this is probably one of the pigments he uses. We thought he was decorating his bower with the tips but he is said to use snail shells, small glossy black, red or blue berries and sometimes freshly picked pink-tinted leaves.

Has anyone up here ever seen a Regent's bower?

We haven't.

Sue Phillips

Guest column: Roger Finn,
KABI Australasian Orchid Society

Epiphytes of Brisbane Forest Park

Dendrobium speciosum var. *hillii*

The Forest Park is a veritable cornucopia of orchids. You don't have to look far to find epiphytes in the trees or terrestrial orchids along the tracks. How well do you know them?

One example is *Dendrobium speciosum* (King Orchid/Rock Lily), often found high in tops of figs and gums where it will catch the sun and the breeze. The variety found around the Brisbane area is *hillii* which has long thin pseudobulbs, often up to 1 metre and 400mm thick growing to form a clump in a fork or along a suitable branch. New pseudobulbs appear every spring and autumn. At times these clumps can be enormous. Often wiry roots grow vertical to catch debris for nourishment. Long racemes, up to 600mm, grow from eyes at the top of the canes and can bear up to 200 flowers. These flowers can be white to yellow. Look for this orchid especially along ridge tops and on the eastern side of Mount Glorious Road where the rainfall is higher.

Den. speciosum var. *hillii* readily forms hybrids in the bush.



Flowering now - Native

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Photocopying courtesy of Dale Shuttleworth, MP, State Member for Ferny Grove

Plant alert

Please consider this before you plant one of those tall, tatty, banana-like Giant Bird of Paradise or Wild Bananas (*Strelitzia nicolai*).

I have seen currawongs eating the fruit but I don't know what other birds or animals may be spreading the seed. Seedlings from this plant have been found in the following places:

Maiala National Park picnic area
Roadside below Mount Glorious village

The "Western Window"
D'Arcy Kelly Road (in the reserve opposite cultivated garden plants
Camp Constable
Along the track from Tenison Woods
Mountain to Mt D'Aguiar (the most scary).

The amazing thing is that there are not many mature cultivated plants on the mountain so to find so many seedlings is of serious concern.

Sue Phillips

A message for all residents

MEPA is your local non-profit environment group. With your help and support, we undertake volunteer on-ground activities to protect our local environment.

HELP US HELP YOU HELP OUR LOCAL AREA!

We offer the following services:

"Do Your Block" (free on-site advice to residents including weed identification, native plant identification, and advice on weed control and bush-friendly planting)

"Ask MEPA" (an email service where we do our best to answer relevant questions you may have – email: askmepa@yahoo.com.au)

Our focus continues to be the protection of our outstanding native flora and fauna. (We are now in the seventh year of our weed management project in the power and road corridors from The Gap, past Mt Glorious, to Wivenhoe Outlook - with funding partners MBRC, BCC, SEQC, DMR, Powerlink, Energex, Telstra and QPWS.)

For all this we need your support.
Membership numbers count.

Please see the membership form opposite for details on how to join and pay.

Thank you
Dominic Hyde
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Mt Nebo & Mt Glorious Environment
Protection Assoc.

MEMBERSHIP 2012 – 2013
\$5.00 per person or \$10.00 per family

Name.....

Address.....

Telephone.....

Email.....

To join:

1. Post this form & payment to PO Box 29; or
2. Post this form to PO Box 29 & pay by electronic transfer:

BSB No.: 064145 Account Number: 00903153
Account Name: MEPA

Please also make sure you enter *your* name so that it will appear on the account statement.