

182

14

The

North Queensland Naturalist

The Journal and Magazine of the North Queensland Naturalists' Club.

Vol XIV 14

CAIRNS, 1st MARCH, 1947

No. 82.

NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALISTS' CLUB

Meets at School of Arts, Shields Street, Cairns.
usually on second Tuesday in each month, at 8 p.m.

Next Monthly Meeting, Tuesday, 11th March, 1947.

MEETINGS AND EXCURSIONS.

- 20th December, 1946: Christmas gathering. See p. 22.
- 22nd December: Excursion to Tringilburra Creek, attendance 28.
- 14th January, 1947: Monthly meeting. "Trip to Gulf Country." Lecture by Mr. Gilbert Bates.
- 19th January: Excursion to Buchan Point. Attendance 30.
- 10th February: Monthly meeting.
- 23rd February: Excursion to Cairns Intake, Freshwater Creek.
- 23rd March: Excursion to Pretty Beach.
- 24th April: Excursion to Barron Gorge and Barron Waters.
- 25th May: Macalister Range.
- 22nd June: Campbell's Creek

NEW MEMBERS ELECTED

- 12th November, 1946: Mesdames M. Forbes, A. Read, F. Legge, J. W. Wyer, S. Favell, and Mr. J. Cantrill, all of Cairns.
- 10th December: Mr. K. Kennedy, Townsville; Mr. J. W. Willkie, Babinda; Mr. John Reed, Melbourne; Mr. Austin Rogers, Trinity Beach; Dr. C. Knott, Mrs. McKauge, Mr. D. Eckhardt, Mr. J. H. Johns, Miss M. Bryan, Mr. H. Pittard, all of Cairns.
- 14th January, 1947: Mrs. J. Goff, Edge Hill; Mr. A. Maxwell, s.s. Cape Leeuwin; Miss M. Anderson, Cairns.
- 10th February: Dr. T. W. Gregg, Mrs. T. W. Gregg; Mr. Wright, Mrs. Wright. Mrs. J. Cantrill, all of Cairns.

TWO NEW BULBOPHYLLUMS FROM BARTLE FRERE

(Family Orchidaceae.)

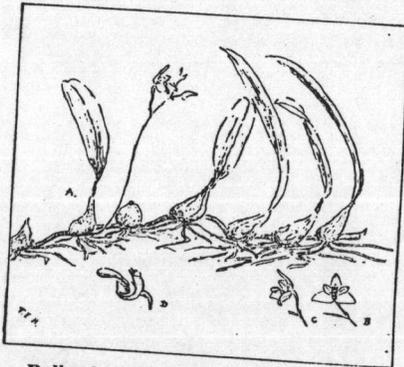
T. E. HUNT, Ipswich.

BULBOPHYLLUM WILKIANUM, sp. nov. Rhizoma breviter repens. Pseudo-bulbi circa 1 c.m. alti, coniformes, cum collis longis, rugosi. Folium solitarium, 3.5-5 c.m. longum, 8-9 m.m. latum, angustum oblongum. Racemus circa 4 c.m. longus cum 1-4 floribus, viridis, filiformis, bractae minimae. Flores albi, circa 1 c.m. lati. Sepalum dorsale ovatum-ellipticum obtusum; sepala lateralia lata ad bases, obtusa; petala, 2-2.5 m.m. canaliculata, obtusa; labellum 2-2.5 m.m. densum, reflexum, canaliculatum ad basem, pallido-flavum cum punctis coccineis, tomentosum. Columna brevissima, gracilis, viridis cum

punctis coccineis ad basem, alae cum cuspidibus binis; anthera obscura, acuta.

Rhizomes creeping, pseudo-bulbs about 1 c.m. high, conical, about 1 c.m. broad at the base and tapering to a rather long neck, deeply wrinkled. Leaf solitary, 3.5-5 c.m. long, 8-9 m.m. wide, oblong-linear, keeled, nerves somewhat prominent. Raceme few flowered, about 4 c.m. long, green, filiform, bracts minute. Flowers white, 9-10 m.m. broad, widely expanding, medial nerve fairly prominent in all segments. Dorsal sepal 5 m.m. long, ovate-elliptical, obtuse; lateral sepals broad at the base form-

ing, with the column-foot, a shallow cup; petals about half the length of the sepals, channelled, obtuse; labellum equal to the petals, thick in texture, erect for less than half its length then bent forward, channelled



Bulbophyllum Wilkianum, sp. nov.
A, B, and C, quarter natural size.
D column and labellum natural size.

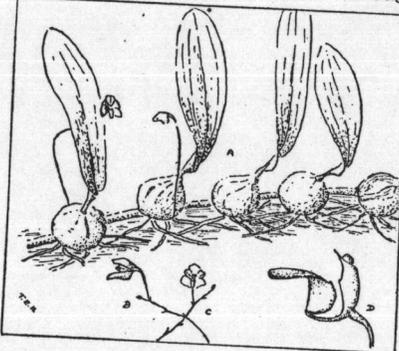
in the basal portion, forward part narrower, about 1 m.m. wide, very pale yellow with crimson markings on the sides towards the base and on each side below, minutely pubescent. Column very short, slender, green with crimson dots on the foot, wings each with two minute apiculate points, the upper ones reaching to the height of the anther; anther small, acute; stigma very small, immediately below the anther.

Mt. Bartle Frere, J. H. Wilkie, September, 1946.

BULBOPHYLLUM WANJURUM, sp. nov., Rhizoma breviter repens Pseudo-bulbi globosi, 1.3-1.4 c.m. alti, rugosi aliquantum. Folium solitarium, 4-6 c.m. longum. 1-1.3 c.m. latum, lineare, obtusum, ad basem angustum, marginibus revolutis. Racemus circa 4 c.m. longus, filiformis. Flores 1-3, albi. Sepalum dorsale circa 5 m.m. longum, ellipticum, obtusum; sepala lateralia circa 6 m.m. longa, falcata, acuta; calcar brevum, latum, obtusum; petala circa 4 m.m. longa, elliptica, obtusa; labellum circa 4 m.m. longum, pallido-flavum, reflexum, trilobatum, ad basem erectum, canaliculatum,

latum, lobi laterales tenues, lobus intermedius longus, angustus, obtusus. Columna brevissima, gracilis, alba; alae altiores quam anthera et cuspidibus demissis; anthera parva.

Rhizomt shortly creeping, pseudo-bulbs ovoid or almost globular 1.3-1.4 c.m. in diameter, very lightly furrowed. Leaf solitary, 4-6 c.m. long, 1-1.3 c.m. wide, broad-linear, obtuse, keeled, contracted at the base, margins revolute. Raceme few flowered, about 4 c.m. long, filiform, bracts minute, apiculate. Flowers white, not opening widely. Dorsal sepal about 5 m.m. long, elliptical, obtuse, cucullate, with three fairly prominent green nerves; lateral sepals about 6 m.m. long, tapering from a broad base, falcate, acute, with three green nerves, forming with the column-foot a short, broad, blunt spur; petals about 4 m.m. long, elliptical, obtuse, with one green nerve; and a labellum about as long as the petals, very pale yellow, attached to the end of the column foot by a very short claw, erect, broad and channelled at the base, curved forward through



B. Wanjurum, sp. nov.
A, B, and C—Plant andowers quarter natural size
D column and labellum enlarged.

90 degrees, three-lobed, the lateral lobes thin in texture, very narrow, ending in blunt points, mid-lobe very minutely pubescent towards the base, long, narrow, blunt; column short, slender, white; wings terminating with an acuminate point on each side of the anther and exceeding it; and with

a minute point on each side about half way up the column; anther small, greenish; stigma oval; column foot curved, green, tapering towards its junction with the labellum.

Mt. Bartle-Frere, J. H. Wilkie, September, 1946.

The flower from which the description of *B. Wanjurum* was made had a group of minute red dots outside near the apex of each petal. They were present also on a subsequent

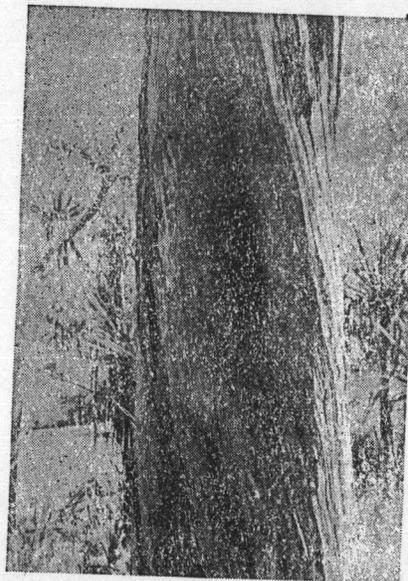
flower, but disappeared as the flower aged. I have omitted mention of them from the description as they might not be a constant feature of the species. They are shown in the figure.

The two species were found growing together on Mt. Bartle Frere by Mr. J. H. Wilkie of Babinda in whose honour I have named one of them. The other takes its name from the Wanjuru aboriginal tribe in whose hunting ground Mt. Bartle Frere lay.

A NATIVE SUGAR BAG

By S. E. STEPHENS President N.Q. Nat. Club.

The accompanying illustration represents a fine specimen of aboriginal handiwork and indicates the patience and infinite labour that a native of olden times would expend in the



gathering of some choice item of food. The tree was a good specimen of Ironwood, *Erythrophloeum Labouchei*, standing on the bank of Emu Creek immediately below Emu Falls and

The size of the opening is such that a man's hand can be only just inserted into the nest cavity. Thus it would be very difficult to gather a handful of comb and withdraw it through the opening. Possibly this duty would have been performed by a picaninny held up to the excavation. On the other hand a stick may have been used in the manner explained by Roth (2).

The fact that this timber is so hard and durable and that it was a standing tree probably accounts for the survival of this specimen over so many years. Tradition states that this sugar bag tree was known as a landmark

over many decades. The appearance of the tree certainly bears out its reputed age.

The specimen has been collected and placed in the ethnological section of the North Queensland Museum collection, being exhibit No. 153 of that section.

References

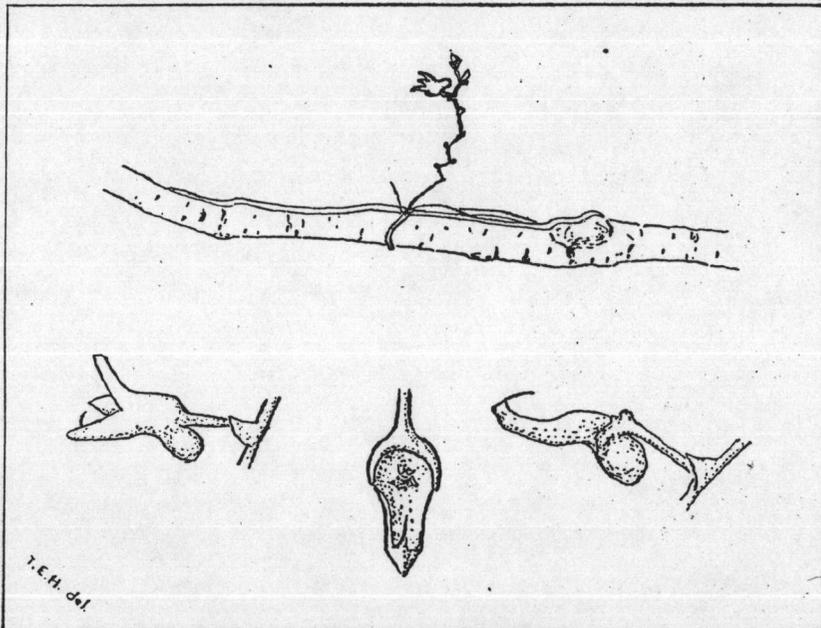
- (1) Tindale, N. H., "Distribution of Australian Aboriginal Tribes," Trans. Roy. Soc. S. Aust. LXIV (1) 1940.
- (2) Roth, Walter E., "Ethnological Studies among the N.W. Central Queensland Aborigines."

Family Orchidaceae

ANOTHER SPECIES OF TAENIOPHYLLUM FROM N.Q.

(T. E. HUNT, Ipswich.)

Taeniophyllum cymbiforme, sp. nov. dicellus cum ovario circa 2 mm. longus. Flos circa 4 mm. longus pallido-viridis; perianthii segmenta circa dimidis longitudinis sepalorum unita;



Taeniophyllum cymbiforme, sp. nov.

- (a).—Plant.
- (b).—Flower side.
- (c).—Labellum from above.
- (d).—Labellum from side.

petala sepalis breviora et acutiora; labellum sepalos aequans, integrum, concavum, apice acuminatum et incurvatum; calcar globosum, pellucidulum. Columna brevissima.

Stem minute, leafless. Raceme about 1.5 cm. long carrying up to 12 flowers. Pedicel, with ovary, about 2 mm. long, bracts broad, acute, minute, persistent. Flower about 4 mm. long, pale green, not widely expanding, segments united for slightly less than half the length of the sepals; petals slightly shorter than the sepals and more acute; labellum about as long as the sepals, entire, cymbiform, apex incurved and terminating in a long acuminate point. Spur globular, translucent. Column minute.

Babinda, J. H. Wilkie, 7/46.
Mr. Wilkie's original collection of four plants of *Taeniophyllum* yielded

this species as well as *T. Wilkianum* Hunt, and *T. Muelleri* Lindl., a somewhat surprising occurrence which gives rise to the thought that perhaps the two new species are not uncommon, and that investigation amongst these diminutive orchids might bring to light additional species.

Being leafless, the latest addition to the genus could not be distinguished from *T. Muelleri* Lindl unless flowers were present. The cymbiform labellum, with its long, pointed, incurved tip, is sufficient to separate *T. cymbiforme* from the other Australian species. The specific name has been given in reference to this feature.

As there is never more than one flower open at a time, and each lasts for over a week, the plant is in flower over a period of several months.

FITZROY ISLAND AND THE N.Q.N.C.

To the list of Club field achievements has been added another name—"Fitzroy Island." The comparatively recent inauguration of monthly outings has done much to arouse public interest in our organisation and at the same time is serving to create much in common among those of us, its members, as well as to strengthen that bond of friendship which exists among those who like to wander under the open sky.

To most of us, "Fitzroy" has been little more than a name—since Sunday that name has become more familiar, for early that morning there embarked from Cairns what might have been a major amphibious operation such was the miscellany of gear assembled, cameras, fishing gear and rucksacs predominating, not to mention the now familiar four gallon billy-can, veteran of many such trips.

Two hours punching a stiff sou-easter across Mission Bay, round Cape Grafton and then east to our island destination, did little to question the sailing ability of our members and only served to create a mighty appetite, which needs must be appeased in true Club fashion, immediately upon landing; a process in itself somewhat

prolonged, being achieved with two small dinghies and much elbow-grease.

The island is blessed with excellent anchorages sheltered from all prevailing winds and providing safe harbour for vessels of quite appreciable draught. Fitzroy, our geologists tell us, was once part of the mainland, a mountain peak, granitic in structure, which, subject to a gradual subsidence of the earth's crust, was submerged to its present insular status, while still retaining its continental characteristics.

Our companions, having discovered that even a four gallon billy has limitations, agreed on a 3.30 p.m. rendezvous and then proceeded to investigate the island's possibilities.

Generally vegetation is abundant, though at the time of our visit severely impoverished by the drought which has reduced the water supply to a bare minimum and left the numerous mountain streams nothing but tumbled masses of thirsty rock. For the most part the terrain may be termed parkland wooded with *Casuarina* and bloodwood (*E. gummifera*), the only eucalypt observed, and an occasional turpentine (*Syncarpia procera*).

To the few sturdy enthusiasts who accepted the challenge of Fitzroy's solitary peak, survived the rigours of "Gentle Annie," a misnomer one particularly troublesome slope has gained and made, of necessity, a rapid ascent; came reward in a scene of unsurpassed magnificence. From the mighty peaks of Bellenden Ker in the south to Thornton Peak on the northern horizon, as far as the eye could see, towered the mountains of our coastal ranges, seen from a somewhat novel aspect across the intervening expanse of sunlit sea. From this wind-swept elevation, the island dropped away beneath us revealing a small plateau and it was here that the more interesting botanical observations of the day were made.

Most striking of all, but unfortunately not in full bloom at the time of our visit, was *Thryptomene oligandra*, with its small white myrtaceous flowers. This plant has been ob-

served on other local islands, but always at higher altitude.

Another inhabitant of the upper slopes, *Astrotricha pterocarpa*, a relation of the domestic *Aralia*, was observed, with masses of flowers crowning its slender stem. Also worthy of note, particularly on account of its relation to the well known forget-me-not, *Tournefortia argenticia*, appeared as it does on so many of these islands, on the beaches with its silvery leaves and massive clusters of white flowers.

The limited time at our disposal curtailed more comprehensive investigation of this intriguing island; indeed, it appeared to be with the greatest difficulty our worthy President succeeded, after much checking and counter checking in his little black book, in assembling the company; a task finally accomplished with the aid of our sturdy friend, the tea billy, battered but beloved object which never fails to exert a magnetic influence on our members, however far afield they may chance to wander.

OUR CHRISTMAS PARTY

(D. BARKUS)

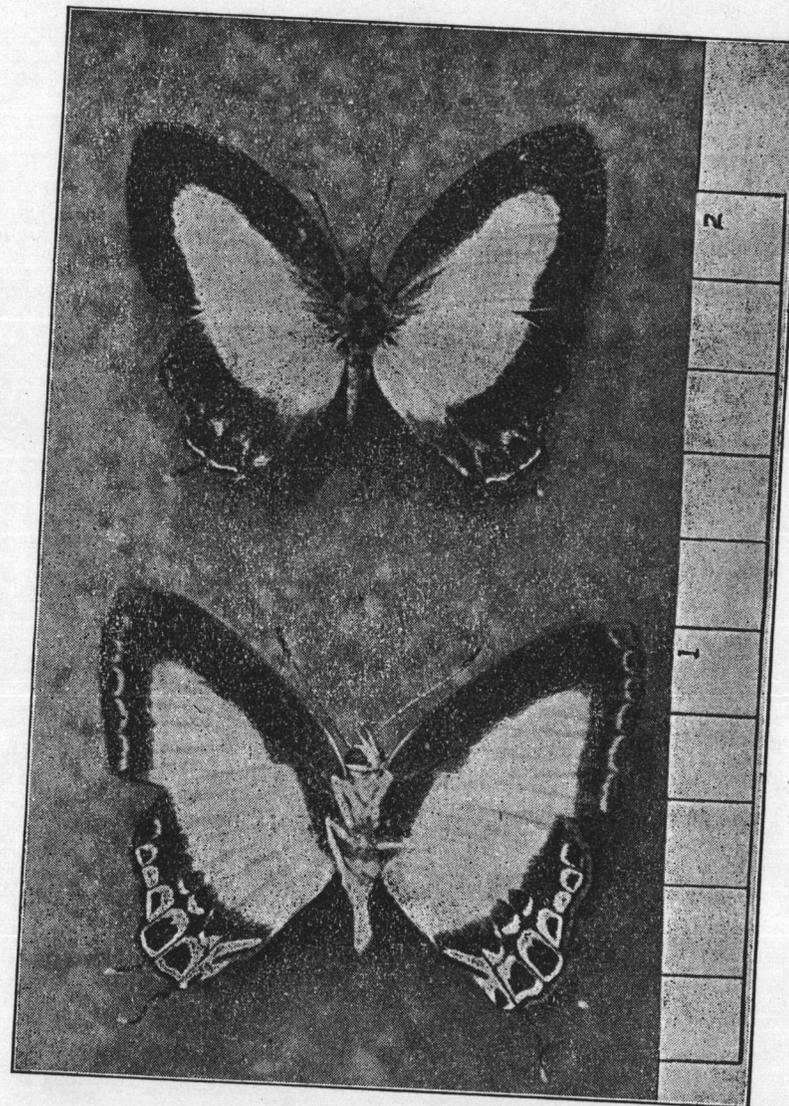
Warm hospitality on the part of Mr. and Mrs. H. Giraud, and a general feeling of festive conviviality amongst the Club members combined to make a gay and happy party at their residence on the 20th December last.

Traditional Scottish style was used in opening the evening's entertainment. A piper lead the way, with Jim Gray as M.C., the President and guests following with laughter and cheers. Over forty enjoyed the fun and few introductions were necessary.

After the presentation of a floral corsage to Mrs. Giraud on behalf of the Club our cheerful cobbler, Jim Gray, made the time go with a swing by his management of the evening's "doings." There were songs for all to sing, with piano accordion accompaniment, bag-

pipes to skirl, interesting competitions, an Indian Club swinging item to watch, and natural coloured movies shown by our President of previous field day trips to Chillagoe, Mungana, Fitzroy Island, Michaelmas Cay, and some garden scenes featuring a small boy present who asked anxiously: "Are you going to show me?" Jim gave us some fine recitations and anecdotes were related by sundry.

The buffet supper provided communally, was literally another event. Mrs. Giraud had made the Christmas cake and it graced the groaning table. Without doubt it was Christmas cheer in the best style and everyone agreed that the Girauds' had set a fine example and we do hope that this party was the forerunner of others to come. We thank them mightily.



Hypolycaena danis turneri, Waterhouse

Vide N.Q. Naturalist, XIV, 81, p. 12.

Each division on scale at right represents one-fifth of an inch.

Photograph by R. B. Williams.

CLUB FIELD DAYS

Since our last issue the Club has held three field days. On 24th November, thirty members and friends visited Fishery Falls; on 22nd December, Tringilburra Creek was visited by thirty members; and on 19th January, the rendezvous was Buchan Point and Cascade Creek with an attendance of twenty-two

At Fishery Falls the havoc wrought by bush fire in jungle country was very clearly in evidence. The development of various fungi in the scorched bark, and the lifting of patches of bark and entry of borers into the timber were inspected by members. The invasion of thinned out areas of jungle by *Lantana Camara* was also brought under notice.

In this area a dominant tree species was noted to be *Macadamia Whelanii*. This species bears nuts up to two inches in diameter, which is considerably larger than those of the related species *M. ternifolia*, the Queensland Nut of commerce. Trees were in full crop at the time of our visit but it was noted that fallen nuts were rapidly hollowed out. The white tailed rat, *Uromys caudimaculatus* Krefft, is reported to be the predator but identification could not be confirmed by the Club as none of the rodents were observed.

Tringilburra Creek has been approved as the source of a new water supply for Cairns City and the Mulgrave Shire. A stream gauge installed on this creek some years ago has shown that the minimum flow, which occurred during the drought season of 1946 was in excess of 5,500,000 gallons per day. Interesting rainfall records, taken in connection with the water supply scheme, at a rain gauge installed on the watershed at 2000 feet elevation are 84 inches in 1946 and 193 inches in 1939. The stream heads in the Centre Peak of Bellenden Ker Mountains.

The country bordering the creek on the western side is largely open forest in which Bloodwood, *Eucalyptus*

gummifera, and wattle, *Acacia aulacocarpa*, predominate. The Grass Tree, *Xanthorrhoea minor*, is a prominent feature on the more rugged parts. The eastern bank shows a great contrast, being jungle clad over practically its whole length above the cultivation area. The creek itself flows over a rocky bed that is thickly boulder strewn. No fish were observed in the section covered by the club, probably on account of the ruggedness and swiftness of flow, but the common fresh water shrimp, *Eupalaemon australis* was fairly plentiful in some of the pools. The common green frog *Hyla caerulea* was observed breeding in water filled rock crevices along the edge of the creek. All stages of the life cycle from egg to young adult frogs were present.

A Nankeen Night Heron, *Nycticorax caledonicus*, apparently killed by a passing car, was collected from the roadside. It has been mounted and added to the museum collection.

On the Buchan Point field day bird spotting resulted in a tally of 24 species observed and identified, and several not sufficiently well observed to identify. Those identified were Peaceful Dove, Welcome Swallow, White breasted Wood Swallow, Indian Myna, Yellow Fig bird, Chestnut breasted Finch, Banded Finch, Red browed Finch, Golden headed Fantail Warbler, Rainbow bird, Wagtail, Peewit, Silver crowned Friar bird, Shining Calornis, Drongo, Dollar bird, Nutmeg Pigeon, Forest Kingfisher, White breasted Cuckoo Shrike, Lewin Honeyeater, Grey breasted Silver-eye, White Egret, Red backed Wren.

The Leguminous tree *Archidendron Lucyi*; bearing bright red and curiously curled pods on the trunk, was prominent along Cascade Creek. *Terminalia Catappa* fruits were ripe in numbers. The edible kernels were sampled by members and pronounced appetising.

PUBLICATIONS OF N.Q. NATURALISTS' CLUB.

1. CHECK LIST OF N.Q. ORCHIDS, Mar., 1945, Price 1/-.
2. MARKETABLE FISH OF CAIRNS AREA, Sept., 1945, Price 1/-.
3. CHECK LIST OF N.Q. FERNS, Nov., 1946. Price 1/-.