

# *A.N.P.S.A. Fern Study Group*

## *Newsletter Number 156*

ISSN 1837-008X DATE: January, 2024

---

LEADER: Steve Lamont: mobile: 0409 955 224; email: lamonts3@optusnet.com.au

TREASURER & MEMBERSHIP: Dan Johnston, 9 Ryhope St, BUDERIM, Qld 4556. Tel. 07 5445 6069,  
mobile: 0429 065 894; email: ANPSAferns@bigpond.com

NEWSLETTER EDITOR: Dan Johnston, contact as above.

### **Program for Sydney Region**

*Steve Lamont*

**Saturday 17 February 2024.** [NOTE: THIS REPRESENTS A CHANGE OF VENUE FROM THE LAST NEWSLETTER.] Meet from about 10.30am for 11am start at the Lamont's residence: 158 Deepwater Road, **Castle Cove**. Take Castle Cove Drive (to the East) off Eastern Valley Way – its 4 mins off Eastern Valley Way. Study topic to be advised or perhaps decide on the day. To register your attendance, or if lost, phone Steve on 040 99 55 22 4.

**Saturday 23 March 2024** [NOTE A WEEK LATER THAN USUAL.] Meet from about 10.00am at **Pierces Pass** (if late just follow the walking track downhill to the "Fairy Grotto" from the car park area). Travelling from Sydney along the Bells Line of Road (Richmond to Lithgow), turn left at the sign to Pierces Pass (West of Mt Tomah) and drive to the car park and picnic area furthest from the Highway (or leave your car at the top & walk down, it's a fair way and relatively steep). The walk involves a short but steep descent to the creek, where *Leptopteris fraseri* is abundant and forming free standing trunks. Bring lunch and water if required. (Eat back at cars or snack enroute). The (unreliable) water tank near the carpark is fed by weeping rocks from above. Toilets are also provided here by National Parks.

**Saturday 20 April 2024.** Meet at Peter Olde's Country Residence at 140 Russell Lane, **Oakdale** at 11am. Ring Peter on 0432110463 if lost (and this is likely) on the way there. Access the property via the M5, take the Picton turn-off, drive approx. 10 km to Picton, turn left at Picton into Argyle St, then take the first right into Barkers Lodge Road. Drive on Barkers Lodge Road to the Oakdale sign (17 km. approx.). Russell Lane is on the right at the Oakdale sign. Then, on the right just past a very large dam and market garden, look for number 140 – "Silky Oaks".

**Saturday 18 May 2024.** Meet at the home of Natalie Wise and John Mazzolani at 4 Laurel Street Willoughby at around 10.30am. Natalie will present a detailed paper about recent fern species name changes.

Please provide indications about attendance by email to [petehin@bigpond.com](mailto:petehin@bigpond.com) a few days before each meeting.

## Program for South-east Queensland Region

Helen Jeremy

### Sunday 4 February – Study topic "Ferns of the Blue Mountains" Zoom meeting.

Zoom meeting at 9.30am. We'll share the highlights of our November trip to the Blue Mountains, Minnamurra Rainforest and Verdigris Fern Nursery, and study species we encountered which are unfamiliar to southern Queenslanders.

**Sunday 3 March – Maroochy Regional Bushland Botanic Gardens.** Meet at 9.30am at the shelter on the left as you drive into the botanic gardens on Palm Creek Road, Tanawah. There are toilets on the right, more or less opposite the shelter. The parking in front of the shelter will probably be occupied at this time but there is more parking further up. Wendy and Dan will guide us through the Fern Glade which has of a large number of south-east Queensland ferns. We will have morning tea and lunch at a picnic table or on the lawn area. BYO morning tea and lunch. After lunch, you might like to explore other areas of these lovely gardens which feature Sunshine Coast native plants.

**Sunday 7 April – Private acreage, Austinville.** Meet at 9.15am at the latest at Mt Nimmel Hall, 237 Austinville Rd, Austinville (about 10 minutes' drive from Mudgeeraba, and 2.4km along Austinville Road) for a toilet stop and to arrange carpooling from there to the property near the head waters of Mudgeeraba Creek, leaving about 9:30am. We will have morning tea at the property before doing two walks on well-graded tracks - one a short distance along a restoration area and the other to a rainforest area. We will have lunch at the property before returning to Nimmel Hall. BYO morning tea, including tea/coffee, and lunch.

**Saturday 11 May - Thylogale Track, D'Aguiar NP, Brisbane (easier option available).** Note this is a **Saturday** walk. Meet at 9.15am. The exact meeting place (either Jolly's Lookout or Boombana) and the direction we will walk the Thylogale track will be decided closer to the excursion depending on inspection of the new facilities available at Boombana. We'll transfer a car(s) to the other end of the walk for transfers back at the end of the walk. The 4 km Grade 3 track passes through rainforest and wet sclerophyll forest and we hope to find 25-30 species. A highlight of past visits has been different variations of *Adiantum hispidulum* and extensive areas of *Blechnum parrisiae* (*Doodia australis*). Members not wishing to walk the full Thylogale Track can enjoy a good number of ferns on the first few hundred metres of the Thylogale from the Jolly's Lookout end and also on the 1.1 km Pitta Circuit at Boombana, meeting the main group when they finish the walk. We will have our BYO lunch at either Jollys or Boombana. **Please make sure you RSVP for this excursion with your walking intentions** so we can plan transfers and lunch venue.

**Sunday 2 June – Moggill Conservation Park, Brisbane.** Meet at 9.30am at the park. Details for this excursion will be circulated later.

Please RSVP for all SEQ meetings to Helen Jeremy at [heljeremy@gmail.com](mailto:heljeremy@gmail.com)

## Fern Gathering Report

### Trip to Blue Mountains, Minnamurra Falls and Verdigris Fern Nursery

Helen Jeremy, Wendy Johnston, Jeff Lynne

Following the great success of the November 2022 Port Macquarie Gathering, Jeff organised a fabulous four-day itinerary for the 2023 Gathering and a dozen fernies were keen. In the end, we were a happy party of seven members from SEQ and NSW - a smaller group than planned due to a few unavoidable late scratchings - but everyone was enthusiastic and we decided to arrive a day early in the Blue Mountains, extending the trip to five days.

First day, and an addition to our original itinerary, was Leura Cascades. Most of us had been there before, but not as fern spotters. There were reminiscences about walking the lit cascades at night decades ago and it was nostalgic to see that some of the old light poles remain.

As this was an unplanned visit, we didn't have a species list and we didn't know what ferns to expect. We found 23 species along the track and were very pleased with the variety. While most of the species we saw were known favourites which we regularly come across in SEQ, we found a handful of ferns that were new to most of us, including *Schizaea rupestris* (although we were disappointed not to find a fertile frond with its distinctive comb at the end), *Sticherus urceolatus* and *Hypolepis rugosula*.

It was informative to see fern allies *Lycopodiella cernua* and *Lycopodium deuterodensum* close together. Newcomers to the latter found its upright strobili and appressed and spreading leaves rather fascinating.

This was our first foray into seeing several *Blechnum* species in the same area. We felt out of our depth trying to identify individual species in the tangled thickets and realised we were going to need to bone up on them for the next days.



*Hypolepis rugosula*



*Sticherus urceolatus*



Appressed and spreading leaves of *Lycopodium deuterodensum*



Upright strobili of *Lycopodium deuterodensum*

Day 2, Mt Wilson. Our morning walk was down the Happy Valley track, a walk with a fine reputation for ferns and a pot of gold called *Leptopteris fraseri*.

We entered the walk through seas of ground ferns: *Polystichum proliferum*, *Blechnum nudum*, *Lastreopsis microsora* and *L. acuminata*. The Queenslanders were struck by the seas of *Polystichum proliferum*, particularly tumbling down the hillsides. It was also wonderful to see so



Hillsides of *Polystichum proliferum*

much *L. acuminata*, a fern we rarely see on our SEQ excursions but which we came to know very well on this trip.

We spent some time comparing *Microsorium scandens* and *M. pustulatum*, which were in close proximity to each other, and admired *Tmesipteris ovata* growing on the *Dicksonia antarctica*. We took the side path to Cathedral Creek and explored the creek bed. Here we found *Asplenium gracillimum*.



Fertile *Polyphlebium venosum*

Once the path descending to Happy Valley became steeper and moister, the rock faces were covered with filmy ferns, and *Grammitis stenophylla* and *Asplenium flabellifolium*. Unfortunately our visit followed a dry period, so there were dozens of patches of wizened *Hymenophyllum cupressiforme* on rocks along the path. This place would be a filmy wonderland after rain! We also saw *Hymenophyllum rarum* and *Polyphlebium venosum*.



Starting the descent to Happy Valley

Only two of us ventured on when the path became steeper and the footing more difficult. A few *Asplenium flaccidum* plants, grey in colour, perhaps from the dry spell, were high up on a boulder above us. We came across many *Blechnum* plants, but we couldn't be definitive in calling the ID. We have included *B. ambiguum* on our list as this was the one species listed in the Sydney group's 2018 visit and it seems a good fit.



*Asplenium flaccidum*

We rounded a bend and immediately had no doubt that we had arrived at a wall of *Leptopteris fraseri*. It is a straightforward fern to identify, with a woody trunk, membranous lamina, and large sporangia scattered on the lower half of the pinnules.

The creek gully certainly deserves the Happy Valley name and would be a wonderful place to explore at length, with another wall of *Leptopteris fraseri* and many *Dicksonia antarctica* and accompanying epiphytes, but we were mindful that the others were waiting for us to return.



Wall of *Leptopteris fraseri*

We popped into the Cathedral of Ferns on the way home. Given that we had a species list of only eight from a Sydney group visit in 2009, we weren't expecting to find many ferns here. We were pleasantly surprised to double the count, adding *Blechnum cartilagineum*, *B. patersonii*, *Dennstaedtia davallioides*, *Microsorium pustulatum*, *M. scandens*, *Pellaea falcata*, *Polyphlebium venosum*, *Pteridium esculentum*, and *Pyrrosia rupestris*. The 2009 group had thought the *Sticherus* at the edge of the parking area was *S. urceolatus*, but our inclination was that it is *S. lobatus* – something to be pondered on the next visit.



*Leptopteris fraseri* scattered sporangia

*Leptopteris fraseri*

Day 3, Wentworth Falls. We were joined by Peter Hind and Don from the Sydney group and we appreciated their coming on a fairly bleak, wet day. We decided to head down the Empress Falls Walk and explore part of the descent to the falls.

The local knowledge and guidance was invaluable. We soon found we could readily distinguish *Blechnum ambiguum* from *B. wattsii*.

Happily, we saw *Leptopteris fraseri* before we turned back, enabling those who missed it at Happy Valley to have a close look at it.



Taking five on the Empress Falls Walk

Day 4, Minnamurra Falls. After a good night at Figtree, we set off to Minnamurra Falls in Budderoo National Park. Torrential rain over night made us a bit concerned about our trip but by morning we only had to contend with light showers and drizzle. At the carpark we met up with Dwayne and while still in the carpark we were already noting the ferns. Through the rather swank Rainforest Centre and out onto the boardwalk, we opted for the most “bang for buck” walk by doing a

combination of the Minnamurra River, Lyrebird Walk and Minnamurra Falls Walk, totalling about 5 kilometres. A really attractive walk, all sealed or elevated boardwalk, a suspension bridge and at times following the Minnamurra River, it kept us all absorbed as we steadily added fern upon fern to our fern list. The falls themselves were a lovely sight and a suitable spot to have lunch. Ended up sighting 34 species.

Once back at the carpark we all headed off, Dwayne back home to Currowan and the rest of us to stay in Surf Beach just south of Batemans Bay.



*Asplenium polyodon* growing under *Asplenium australasicum*.



*Hymenophyllum cupressiforme*



*Platycerium bifurcatum*



A happy group crossing the suspension bridge.



Minnamurra Falls



Day 5, Verdigris Fern Nursery. Off to Dwayne and Kylie's Verdigris Fern Nursery, just half an hour up the road.

Now, no matter what I say/write, it will not prepare you for the visual assault of the quantity and variety of ferns on this property. Dwayne started by doing a quick tour of the grounds and then as we got closer to the house the number steadily increased. Native and exotic, all identified and a story with every one. Dwayne has done a lot of work landscaping and the plants seem to be responding by growing very well.

A brief bite to eat, then inside for a PowerPoint presentation on how they collect and sow spore then propagate till they finally have a saleable fern. It's a long and involved process and when holding the finished product you don't realise the time and effort that goes into creating that particular plant.

Then came the really fun part. Down to the growing shed, or more accurately, sheds. An awe inspiring range from around the world, every shape and size, a truly OMG moment. We were all like kids in a lolly shop. All of us took some home, some with more than others. Dwayne was certainly in his element and we thank him and Kylie for taking their time and patience in showing us around.

From there back to Surf Beach, fish and chips in the park and next morning homeward bound.

The trip was a great success, ticking all the boxes for ferns, logistics and fun. Many thanks to Jeff for planning the walks, organising accommodation and ensuring a good time was had by all.



Dwayne Stocks in one of the Verdigris sheds

SPECIES LIST - FERN GATHERING NOVEMBER 2023					
	Leura Cascades 2-Nov-23	Happy Valley 3-Nov-23	Cathedral of Ferns 3-Nov-23	Empress Falls 4-Nov-23	Minnamurra Falls 5-Nov-23
<i>Adiantum atroviride</i>					X
<i>Adiantum diaphanum</i>					X
<i>Adiantum formosum</i>					X
<i>Adiantum hispidulum</i>					X
<i>Arthropteris tenella</i>					X
<i>Asplenium australasicum</i>					X
<i>Asplenium flabellifolium</i>	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Asplenium flaccidum</i>		X			
<i>Asplenium gracillimum</i>		X			
<i>Asplenium polyodon</i>					X
<i>Blechnum ambiguum</i>		X		X	
<i>Blechnum cartilagineum</i>	X	X	X		X
<i>Blechnum minus</i>	X				
<i>Blechnum nudum</i>	X	X	X		X
<i>Blechnum patersonii</i>		X	X		X
<i>Blechnum wattsii</i>	X			X	
<i>Calochlaena dubia</i>		X	X	X	X
<i>Cyathea australis (Alsophila australis)</i>	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Cyathea cooperi (Sphaeropteris cooperi)</i>					X
<i>Cyathea leichhardtiana (Sphaeropteris australis)</i>					X
<i>Davallia pyxidata</i>					X

<i>Dennstaedtia davallioides</i>		X	X		
<i>Dicksonia antarctica</i>	X	X	X	X	X
<i>Diplazium australe</i>		X	X		X
<i>Doodia aspera</i> ( <i>Blechnum neohollandicum</i> )		X			X
<i>Doodia caudata</i> ( <i>Blechnum spinulosum</i> )					X
<i>Gleichenia dicarpa</i>	X				
<i>Gleichenia microphylla</i>	X			X	
<i>Grammitis stenophylla</i>		X			X
<i>Histiopteris incisa</i>	X				
<i>Hymenophyllum cupressiforme</i>		X			X
<i>Hymenophyllum rarum</i>		X			
<i>Hypolepis glandulifera</i>					X
<i>Hypolepis rugosula</i>	X				
<i>Lastreopsis acuminata</i> ( <i>Parapolystichum acuminatum</i> )		X	X		X
<i>Lastreopsis decomposita</i>					X
<i>Lastreopsis microsora</i> ( <i>Parapolystichum microsorum</i> )		X			X
<i>Leptopteris fraseri</i>		X		X	
<i>Lindsaea microphylla</i>	X			X	
<i>Lycopodiella cernua</i> ( <i>Palhinhaea cernua</i> )	X				
<i>Lycopodium deuterodensum</i> ( <i>Pseudolycopodium densum</i> )	X			X	
<i>Microsorium pustulatum</i> ( <i>Zealandia pustulata</i> )		X	X		
<i>Microsorium scandens</i> ( <i>Dendroconche scandens</i> )		X	X		X
<i>Pellaea falcata</i>	X	X	X		X
<i>Pellaea nana</i>	X	X			X
<i>Platycterium bifurcatum</i>					X
<i>Polyphlebium venosum</i>		X	X		
<i>Polystichum proliferum</i>		X	X		
<i>Pteridium esculentum</i>	X	X	X	X	
<i>Pteris tremula</i>	X				X
<i>Pteris umbrosa</i>					X
<i>Pyrrhosia rupestris</i>	X	X	X		X
<i>Schizaea rupestris</i>	X				
<i>Sticherus lobatus</i>			X	X	
<i>Sticherus urceolatus</i>	X				
<i>Tmesipteris ovata</i>		X			
<i>Todea barbara</i>	X	X		X	X
<b>Total</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>18</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>34</b>



# South-East Queensland Meeting Reports

## Wollumbin Palms, Mount Warning, 10<sup>th</sup> September 2023

Jeff Lynne

The Sunday morning was crisp, the weather clear, as 8 members of the FSG fronted up to Mt Warning for a morning of fern spotting. Good to see new member Brent make the trip down, as well as Gold Coast member Michelle. The rest consisted of Helen, Sue, Beth, Graham, Bill (Woolgoolga) and Jeff (Port Macquarie). Our venue was a 65 acre property near the base of Mt Warning, Wollumbin Palms Rainforest Retreat and our hosts are Kay and Andrew. They have owned the property for 10? years and, wow, what a place to call home. 3 unique lodges scattered around the property are definitely top end and would provide an extraordinary experience for anyone contemplating a stay.



View from the Earth Lodge looking towards Mt Warning.

Kay and Andrew stayed with us for the whole walk which started at Korrumbyn Creek then headed gradually uphill along a fire trail, over a ridge, past a one acre dam and, after a short march up a very steep hill, led us to lunch at the Earth Lodge. We started in subtropical rainforest so the fern species were coming quickly, but even as we entered the drier sclerophyll forest we constantly added to our list.

**Wollumbin Palms** ferns: *Adiantum hispidulum*, *Arachniodes aristata*, *Asplenium australasicum*, *A. polyodon*, *Blechnum cartilagineum*, *B. patersonii*, *Calochlaena dubia*, *Cheilanthes sieberi*, *Christella dentata*, *C. parasitica*, *Cyathea australis*, *C. leichhardtiana*, *Davallia pyxidata*, *Dicranopteris linearis*, *Doodia aspera*, *D. caudata*, *Hypolepis muelleri*, *Lastreopsis marginans*, *Lygodium japonicum*, *Nephrolepis cordifolia*, *Pellaea viridis*, *Pityrogramma calomelanos* var. *austroamericana*, *Platynerium bifurcatum*, *P. superbum*, *Pteridium esculentum*, *Pyrrosia confluens*, *P. rupestris*, *Sticherus flabellatus*, which adds up to 28 species. Note that there are ferals/escapees in the list i.e. the *Lygodium*, the *Pellaea* and the *Pityrogramma*. Also note that the ferns were seen in NSW and as such I have used the names currently accepted by the RBG as found on their Plantnet site.

All in all a great morning. Many thanks to our hosts for letting us loose on their property and allowing us to use the Earth Lodge as a lunch time stop, Graham for being a font of ferny knowledge, Michelle and Helen for organising the day and all the members for making it an excellent outing and the memory of which shall not be fugacious.

An additional bit... Some of us are organised and then there is me. But with a little bit of help from my friends, a few of us managed to make a long weekend of it. Stayed just down the road in the Mt Warning Rainforest Park which was very pleasant. Both Wollumbin Palms and this park are on the Mt Warning Road which terminates about 5 kms up the road at Mt Warning. We took several walks along the road and found these ferns... **Mt Warning Road** ferns: *Adiantum formosum*, *A. hispidulum*, *Arachniodes aristata*, *Asplenium australasicum*, *Blechnum cartilagineum*, *Calochlaena dubia*, *Christella dentata*, *C. parasitica*, *Cyathea cooperi*, *C. leichhardtiana*, *Davallia pyxidata*, *Dicranopteris linearis*, *Doodia aspera*, *D. caudata*, *Hypolepis glandulifera*, *Lycopodiella cernua*, *Lygodium japonicum*, *Nephrolepis cordifolia*, *Ophioglossum pendulum*, *Pityrogramma calomelanos* var. *austroamericana*, *Platynerium bifurcatum*, *P. superbum*, *Pteridium esculentum*, *Pteris tremula*, *P. umbrosa*, *P. vittata*, *Pyrrosia confluens*, *P. rupestris*, *Sticherus flabellatus*,

And as Mt Warning was just a wee way up the road then a trip to Lyrebird Track was on the cards.

**Mt Warning** ferns: *Adiantum formosum*, *Arthropteris beckleri*, *A. tenella*, *Asplenium australasicum*, *A. polyodon*, *Blechnum patersonii*, *Davallia pyxidata*, *Diplazium assimile*, *Doodia aspera*, *D. caudata*, *Haplopteris elongata*, *Lastreopsis microsora*, *L. munita*, *Pellaea nana*, *Pteris tremula*, *P. umbrosa*.

# Other Articles

## Book Review

Andrew Orme

South Coast Ferns. A complete guide to the ferns and fern allies of the NSW South Coast

Kevin Mills, 2023

193 pages, \$45.00.

Full colour, map, index.

Envirobook, Sussex Inlet – envirobook.com.au

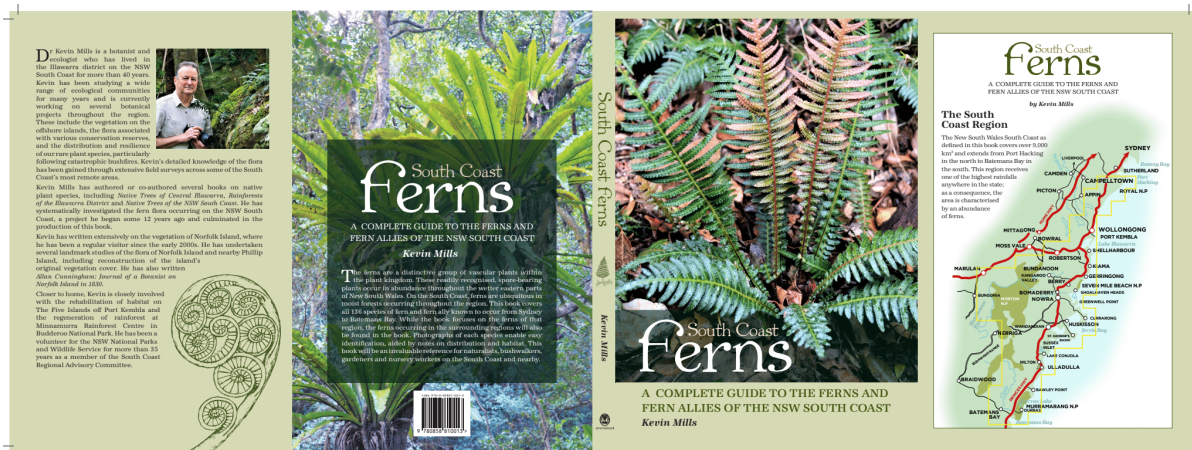
South Coast ferns is a complete account of the fern and fern allies of the NSW south coast, covering all known native and naturalised taxa which occur in the region.

Dr Kevin Mills has produced a comprehensive catalogue of the Polypodiophyta (Pteridophyte) flora of the New South Wales south coast, yet at the same time has also produced an exemplary field guide. The layout for each taxon provides the reader with the required information necessary for a quick field identification, along with clear, detailed images of the habit and fertile fronds of each entity. Where applicable, synonymy is provided, which is particularly useful where there is debate on taxonomy. For each entity there are distinguishing characters, occurrence status, etymology, and a distribution map based on Dr Mills extensive field experience as well as herbarium specimen-based data. This field guide will be an essential publication for all who are drawn in by the fern flora, from the experienced botanist to the amateur enthusiast, and not only for those on the south coast, as this publication will be a valuable reference for adjacent regions.

The layout, while beautifully illustrated, is also succinct and consistent, providing the perfect level of detail required for a field guide. The introduction and early chapters provide the reader with detailed information on the south coast environment, the varied habitats and fern distribution; an introduction to the biology of ferns; botanical nomenclature; a historical context which explores some early accounts of First Nation’s uses through to early European experiences. The information on fern weeds and environmental concerns is also very welcome.

From first picking this field guide up, it is clear to me that it will provide the reader with an easy to access account of the fern flora of the NSW South Coast, which I am certain will remain a significant and essential regional field guide for all those interested in these wonderful plants for many years to come.

Andrew Orme, Technical Officer, Botanical Identification Service,  
National Herbarium of NSW, Royal Botanic Gardens, Sydney



# A misguided search for the adder's tongue

Brendan McIntyre

Report to Fern Study Group, Australian Native Plants Society (Australia)

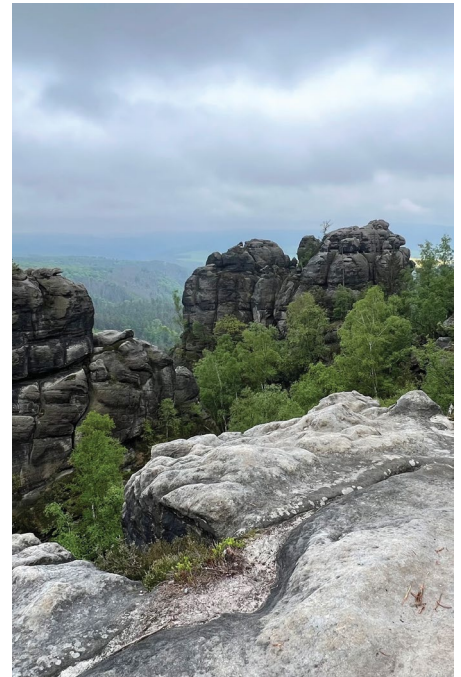
Kleiner Winterberg, National Park Saechsische Schweiz, Germany, 16 May 2023

Lynx still lurk in this part of Europe. Black storks nest in hidden valleys. Cep emerge from mossy carpets under silver birches. Dormice curl up in their bushy tails in hollows only to sleep. Silver firs compete against cultivated oceans of Norwegian spruce. Out of earshot, Eurasian beavers bring down black alders at the river's edge. The river cuts a narrow passage through the Elbe Sandstone Mountains. Somewhere on a mesa, the adder's tongue fern persists. Welcome to Germany's hotspot for ferns where about 23 species exist - 33 taxa including subspecies and hybrids.

This is a story about an unstructured meander through Saxon Switzerland National Park where we chanced upon some ferns. It's a place we know pretty well: where, in the company of family and friends many goal-oriented hikes were accomplished, and many songs were sung around campfires. People instinctively gravitate to the region's natural beauty... and its ferns, no doubt. But we were just happy to be spending valuable time with our son, who was studying in Dresden.

It was our first day of grey cool weather on holiday and what better way to spend it than to go hiking in the crisp conifer infused air and end it in a 'gemuetliche' German restaurant. Utilising our Deutschland Ticket we trained it to Bad Schandau and then caught the bus and inadvertently got off one stop too early at Neumann-Muehle. From there we legged it along the Grosser Zschandbach to what is collectively known as who-knows-where. Our son was a native and well-travelled in this neck of the woods, so for good or bad we entrusted him with the navigation. The words 'Kleiner Winterberg' and 'It's-just-another-hour-away' served as markers to help guide us for the best part of a day.

Initially, on the bus trip, we were shocked at the level of damage caused by the European spruce bark beetle (*Ips typographus*) to the Norwegian spruce plantations - some parts looked truly post-apocalyptic. Something unfamiliar was going on here and a certain level of blissonance crept in. I was aware that the chief species affected, the Norwegian spruce



Not getting anywhere very fast.



Sandstone, the dominant feature of Saxon Switzerland.

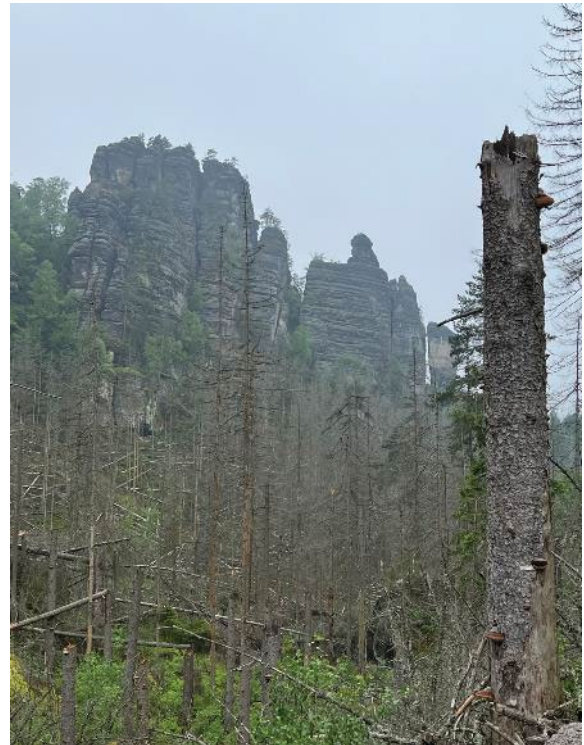
(*Picea abies*), wasn't indigenous, but as it was cultivated on such a broad scale, it accounted for the bulk of upper strata greenery, which wouldn't be replaced any time soon. It may seem hard to imagine, but we were well into our hike before I even started to think about ferns.

As we are unsure of where exactly we went, the enabled location services on my smartphone assisted me in retracing this tale. A handy app helped me to identify the first fern as the very cosmopolitan [\*Pteridium aquilinum\* \(Bracken\)](#). Second cab off the rank was [\*Blechnum spicant\* \(Deer fern\)](#). It was hidden on a rise among some grasses on the side of the track that we double-backed on. On closer inspection its young croziers glistened blood burgundy before turning bright green. Next came the widespread [\*Athyrium filix-femina\* \(Lady fern\)](#), with all new bright green fronds erupting in unison in most wooded areas - a ubiquitous indicator that spring was upon us.

Next in line came [\*Dryopteris dilatata\* \(Broad buckler-fern\)](#), rachises covered in brown scales. Judging from the picture's GPS coordinates we walked straight past the Kleiner Winterberg without even catching sight of it. No matter... the company, the beautiful silver trunked beech trees, and my biophilic tendencies toward the adder's tongue were driving me on. On walking westward along a sandstone terrace we rounded a corner where a scorched landscape opened up in front us. The vast tracts of dead Norwegian spruce and the resulting increased fuel loads, mixed together with three years of unusually low precipitation, transformed the plantation into a tinderbox. In our minds this part of the world was always verdant green.

We descended the Oberer Affensteinweg and back into more familiar green emerald forest where we stumbled across a [\*Dryopteris carthusiana\* \(Narrow buckler-fern\)](#) just starting to wake up out of its winter dormancy. On strolling into Schmilka on the Czech border, the end point of our trip, we spotted a [\*Polypodium vulgare\* \(Common polypody\)](#) growing as a lithophyte on an ancient looking sandstone drain under a huge beech tree. As the sandstone path started to grow up around us on entering the township, more ferns started to emerge out of the walls.

A species that is also native to Australia, [\*Asplenium trichomanes\* \(Maidenhair Spleenwort\)](#), grew out of a crevice in the sandstone wall. The whole place seemed to be a shrine to lithophytic fern species - the town on the river offering the perfect microclimate for fern recruitment. [\*Cystopteris fragilis\* \(Brittle bladder fern\)](#) was the next fern on display, sori already starting to develop under the pinnules. The smallest of the ferns



The European spruce bark beetle strikes.



*Cystopteris fragilis* at home in the sandstone.



Schmilka in Germany is located on the border to the Czech Republic.

and somewhat resembling plastic due to its hairless fronds, the common [\*Asplenium ruta-muraria\* \(Wall-Rue\)](#), was also found beautifying the rock. The last specimen we discovered was a cultivated [\*Polystichum setiferum\* \(Soft shield fern\)](#) specimen growing in someone's front yard, resplendent in glossy chestnut coloured hairs. It's not native to Germany, but on searching for records I noticed that it was naturalised in the Czech Republic.

And what of the adder's tongue fern (*Ophioglossum vulgatum*)? Well, they don't typically appear until June, about a month after we went exploring. They are difficult to spot in the wild and as a rule do not grow in densely wooded forests. There are, however, records of it in the region, but they are probably found close to fields or on top of the mesas. So as they say, it's the journey that counts and not the destination. Let the search for the adder tongue continue.

Ferns seen: *Asplenium ruta-muraria*, *Asplenium trichomanes*, *Athyrium filix-femina*, *Blechnum spicant*, *Cystopteris fragilis*, *Dryopteris carthusiana*, *Dryopteris dilatata*, *Polypodium vulgare*, *Polystichum setiferum*, *Pteridium aquilinum*.

Members present: Yve & Brendan McIntyre

*ed.* The links on the fern references in the text link to Brendan's iNaturalist entries for each of these ferns, having multiple photos of each fern observed. *No help to hard copy newsletter recipients, of course.*

## ANPSA Fern Study Group Financial Statement

Dan Johnston

1<sup>st</sup> July, 2022 to 30<sup>th</sup> June, 2023

Initial balance	12,517.86
Plus Membership fees	185.00
Term deposit interest	112.72
Donations	15.00
Subtotal	12,830.58
Less Newsletter costs	230.42
<b>Final Balance</b>	<b>12,600.16</b>

\$12,000 is held as a term deposit; and \$616.16 is in the Society Cheque Account. Both bank accounts are with the Commonwealth Bank.

## ANPSA Fern Study Group Fees for 2023–2024

Dan Johnston, treasurer

The annual subscription to the Fern Study Group is \$5 for per household receiving a single copy of the Fern Group Newsletter and was due on 1<sup>st</sup> July, 2023. Please note also that membership of an ANPSA affiliated body, such as Native Plants Queensland, is a necessary prerequisite for study group membership.

**Our leader, Steve Lamont, has decided that fees will not be required after June, 2025.**

Newsletters are sent by email (colour images, Adobe Acrobat pdf file) or by post (B&W images).

If you get your newsletter by email, the current paid-to date will be in the body of the email.

If you get your newsletter by post, the envelope address and an enclosed note will show your current **paid-to date:**

**June 2019** Payment of \$20 is overdue; a total of \$25 is due to take you to June, 2024 and \$30 will take you to June, 2025 and into the indefinite future.

**June 2020** Payment of \$15 is overdue and a total of \$20 is due to take you to June, 2024 and \$25 will take you to June, 2025 and into the indefinite future.

**June 2021** Payment of \$10 is overdue and a total of \$15 is due to take you to June, 2024 and \$20 will take you to June, 2025 and into the indefinite future.

**June 2022** Payment of \$5 is overdue and a total of \$10 is due to take you to June, 2024 and \$15 will take you to June, 2025 and into the indefinite future.

**June 2023** Payment of \$5 is due to take you to June, 2024 and \$10 will take you to June, 2025 and into the indefinite future.

**June 2024** or later. You have already paid for the current year.

**Methods of payment:**

- In person at a Queensland group meeting.
- By cheque or money order posted to me:  
Dan Johnston,  
9 Ryhope St,  
Buderim, Qld. 4556.

For new members, please provide contact details e.g. name, address, and optionally an email address and phone number(s). For new members, newsletters will be provided by email only. Make cheques payable to 'Fern Study Group'.

- By electronic bank transfer or direct deposit. You can transfer or deposit into our account.

Account name: **Fern Study Group**  
Account number (Commonwealth Bank):  
BSB: 064178  
Account: 10230709

Please give your name as the "To account description" (other banks may have different terminology). If you use the electronic bank transfer or direct deposit method, I suggest that you also send me an email at: **ANPSAferns@bigpond.com** so that if I have any queries about the payment, I can contact you by return email.