



**Trees for the Evelyn and Atherton Tablelands Inc**  
The right tree in the right place for the right reason

# TREAT



[Home](#) [About](#) [Contact](#) [Events Calendar](#) [Site Map](#)  
[Projects](#) [Mabi Forest](#) [TREAT & Wildlife](#) [Resources](#)

»TREAT Home »Resources »TREAT Newsletter April 1982

## TREAT Newsletter April 1982

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### 1.

In case you haven't heard we have now been christened. Several hilarious and even scurrilous names were suggested but we finally settled on TREAT.

As if you didn't know this is an acronym for Trees for the Evelyn and Atherton Tablelands. Short, simple and descriptive, it also lends itself to various derivatives like Treat yourself and so on.

The first outside Field Day took place on 20th March beginning at Les Barnes tree farm near Lake Eacham and went on to the National Parks and Wildlife office nearby. Considering the wet weather there was an excellent turnout including two members who arrived 171 hours early.

### 2.

The Steering Committee meets regularly and has several projects in mind. The second outdoor meeting is being held at Rotoract Park near Carinya Home in Atherton on 24th March at 1.30 when the muddy sweaty business of actually planting will start.

The third meeting will take place at Sluice Creek Road on the Evelyn Tablelands at 1.30 p.m. on Saturday 29th May. The purpose is seed and seedling collecting which should be of considerable interest. We have of course to build up a store of seeds and growing trees and several of the required species are to be found in this area.

Please meet at Millaa Millaa Lookout at 1.30 p.m., and we will move on to Sluice Creek which is a dirt road linking, two bitumen roads. Being close to 4000 feet up the vegetation is rather specialised and intriguing.

Bring a pile of old newspapers and a pair of seccateurs plus a small trowel if you have one. We will supply plastic bags and all the necessary expertise. Afterwards we will ask for volunteers to pot up the young plants and look after them until we can get them planted out appropriately. The newspapers are not for reading but to keep seedlings moist and lively.

Sometime during the afternoon we will hold a brief meeting to discuss any items of interest. One is that we are approaching the Eacham and Atherton Shire Councils introducing ourselves and asking for suggestions for projects.

### 3. 1982 - Australian Year of the Tree

The following is taken from the UNAA Qld. News Oct. 1981. 1982 is to be the Australian Year of the Tree. The year shall begin on June 5 1982.

On June 6 1981 a conference was held by the Environment Committee of United Nations Association of Australia (NSW) to plan the various facets of this reforestation campaign. By August 1981 this committee grew into the United Nations Association of Australia National Environment Committee.

This committee was first convened in early 1981 to promote the concept of 1982 as the Australian Year of the Tree. In May 1981 Dr. Richard St. Barbe Baker, the founder of the world-wide movement 'Men of the Trees' visited Australia to participate in the launching of the national campaign.

The report of the June Conference outlined the aims and objectives of the campaign.

1. The conference resolved to support the proposal for 1982 as Australian Year of the Tree.
2. That dialogue continue with the United Nations to press for an International Year of the Tree in 1987.
3. The conference felt that the Australian Year of the Tree be the first stage of a general 'Greening of Australia' campaign leading up to 1988, the Bi-Centennial Year.
4. It was decided that the United Nations Organisation be approached to stage an international environment conference in Australia in 1988 similar to the U.N. Conference on Human Environment held in Stockholm in 1972.
5. One of the main concerns of the Australian Year of the Tree is to launch a festive and informative public awareness and education programme about conservation, propagation, planting and maintaining trees and forests in Australia.
6. To begin initial planning for reforestation and tree planting projects.

All marvelously worthy and soporific. Tony Irvine of the CSIRO has a more practical viewpoint. He says :-

'As a group of people who have been settling Australia since 1788 we have been slow to recognise the quality of the local vegetation and what it has to offer. We have ignored the local aboriginal cultures and commenced growing roses, pine trees and apples. This ignorance continued in the settling of north Queensland. Roses and pine trees were still grown but the apples failed.

Possibly this failure and the relatively unhappy appearance of roses resulted in a shift in attitudes but the change did not turn to the local flora. Instead it switched to 'Poinci-frangi-randas' or 'Cassia-poinci-panis' and mangoes. Roses have mainly become a secondary consideration but tropical pines are popular.

Only over about the last 30 years has there been any widespread interest in growing Australian plants in our gardens and this interest developed in southern Australia.

Recently on an excursion to 3 suburban gardens in Cairns organised by the Cairns branch of the Society for growing Australian Plants I was surprised to see that the 'native' gardens consisted mainly of NSW and south Qld, plants with only the odd North Queensland plant present.

Our conservatism re the vegetation around us still prevails. Some of the southern plants were doing well, others were behaving like annuals and dying prematurely. Some died quickly, particularly much of the south west Australian stock.

It is remarkable that there are so few north Qld, plants in cultivation particularly when per unit area we have more species present than any other area in Australia.

TREAT can help by focusing attention on north Qld, trees. This does not mean that we should not try some southern or introduced tropical stock but a major component of our interest should be on the rich genetic resources around us.

Some trees will not do well when planted on particular soil types. We need to take account of site characteristics in assessing the likely adaptability of particular trees to cultivation in particular sites. There will be situations where particular trees will surprise and prove to be very adaptable and perform as well or even better than on their natural sites but this information will only be gained by trial and error on a small scale before recommending large scale attempts. Some small scale attempts may already be in existence in the backyards and properties of the Tablelands. We should note the success or failure of these attempts where we can.'

### 4. Visit of Len Webb

*Les Barnes*

Len worked for 30 years on rain forests with CSIRO assisted by Geoff Tracey. He has now retired but is still active. He will be in the area at the end of May to mid-June. We hope to arrange a public meeting at that time.

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### More Newsletters

- TREAT Newsletter April 1982 (this page)
- [Previous TREAT Newsletters](#)

[↑ Top of Page](#)