

The

North Queensland Naturalist

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

Vol. VI.

CAIRNS, 1st MARCH, 1938.

No. 53.

NORTH QUEENSLAND NATURALISTS' CLUB

Meets at Girls' and Infants' School, Abbott Street, Cairns,
usually on second Monday in each month, at 8 p.m.

BUSINESS FOR NEXT MEETING, Monday, 14th March, 1938.

REPORT OF MEETING:

14th February, 1938.

Mr. B. O. Balfe gave an address entitled "Care of Native Animals in Captivity."

New Junior Member Elected:

John Crossland, Gordonvale.

NORTH QUEENSLAND MUSEUM.

Through the courtesy of the Queensland Government, a quarter-acre block of land in a convenient site in the

centre of the city has been vested in the Cairns City Council for the purpose of a museum. Meanwhile, a Provisional North Queensland Museum Committee has been formed to raise funds for this purpose, under the chairmanship of the Mayor of Cairns, Mr. W. A. Collins. The Cairns City Council has erected a temporary store room for the accommodation of the N.Q. Herbarium and other specimens for the museum. The members of the N.Q. Naturalists' Club have already subscribed £38/2/6 towards the fund for the building.

A NEW LIPARIS FROM NORTH QUEENSLAND.

AND NOTES ON *L. CUNEILABRIS*, F.V.M.

By W. H. NICHOLLS.

LIPARIS FLECKERI, sp. nov.

Rhizoma breviter repens; radicibus fibrosis; pseudobulbis pyriformibus rugose-granulosis; foliis sub-longis lineare-spathulatis, planiusculatis; floribus racemosis, erectis, parvis viridibus numerosis circa 1 cm. diametro; sepalum dorsale erectum concavum; sepala lateralia anguste-lanceolatis falcatis; petala anguste-linearia patentia; labellum oblongo-cuneatum recurvatum canaliculatum; basi glandiis conspicuis, flavis; columna viridis, subincurvata; anthera obscura.

Rhizome shortly creeping; roots fibrous pseudo-bulbs pyriform with a rugose-granular surface, longitudinally grooved; leaves linear-spathulate, rather long and thinner than in *L. cuneilabris* F.v.M., lamina quite flat; raceme erect; flowers small, green, numerous about 1 cm. in diameter; dorsal sepal erect, concave; lateral sepals narrow-lanceolate falcate; petals narrow-linear, wide spread; labellum oblong-cuneate, recurved, but not markedly so, green deeply-channelled; disk without the

prominent orange-coloured curved lines of other Australian species; base of lamina with two conspicuous conjoined orange-coloured glands; column green erect, only slightly incurved; anther inconspicuous.

This plant is apparently more closely related to Mueller's *L. cuneilabris*, than to other described Australian forms, but differs from that species, chiefly in the very characteristic pseudo-bulbs; the green flowers, (in *L. cuneilabris* the flowers are yellow); a differently shaped and smaller labellum; the labellum-lamina is minus the conspicuous orange-coloured curved lines so noticeable in other forms, but possesses at the base large orange-coloured glands.

I have named the new species after its discoverer, Dr. H. Flecker, of Cairns.

There appears to be very little information available concerning some of the Australian forms—especially is this true of *L. cuneilabris*.

I have examined Mueller's material in the National Herbarium, Melbourne, and I had no hesitation in concluding that the form which I have figured under that name in the North Queensland Naturalist† is the correct one.

The Baron's specimens are somewhat fragmentary—but the flowers are, in their dried condition distinctly yellow (in the new form they dry green)—an attached note in the Baron's handwriting reads "14 April, 1864. Dwarf orchid tope (sic) of

Range under dense scrub; flowers yellow about a foot high. All my specimens almost spoilt coming through the dense scrub."—thus to Mueller's original description is added "*Rhizoma ignotum*."

The above definitely establishes the colour of the flowers in *L. cuneilabris* which is, in this particular instance, of some importance and interest.

H. N. Ridley in his monograph of the Genus *Liparis* 1886, p. 287 reduces *L. cuneilabris* to a variety of *L. reflexa* but Australian botanists rightly regard it as a distinct species.

In connection with the description of *L. cuneilabris* another name (italicised) *Sturmia angustilabris* appears.

"Mueller first proposed to place the Australian representatives under *Sturmia* Reichb. and in his "Census of Australian plants" (1882) p. 110, this name appears, but in his "Fragmenta" (1864) both genus names are given, but it is generally recognised that *Liparis* has priority"‡

Dr. Flecker writes in reference to his discovery:

"Specimen No. 3080, growing on rocks, greenish-yellow flowers, Belenden Ker—about 4,000 feet above sea level and appears to be moderately plentiful, being gathered into clumps . . . the vegetation in this region though rain forest in type was by no means dense."

† Vol. IV., June, 1936, p. 34.

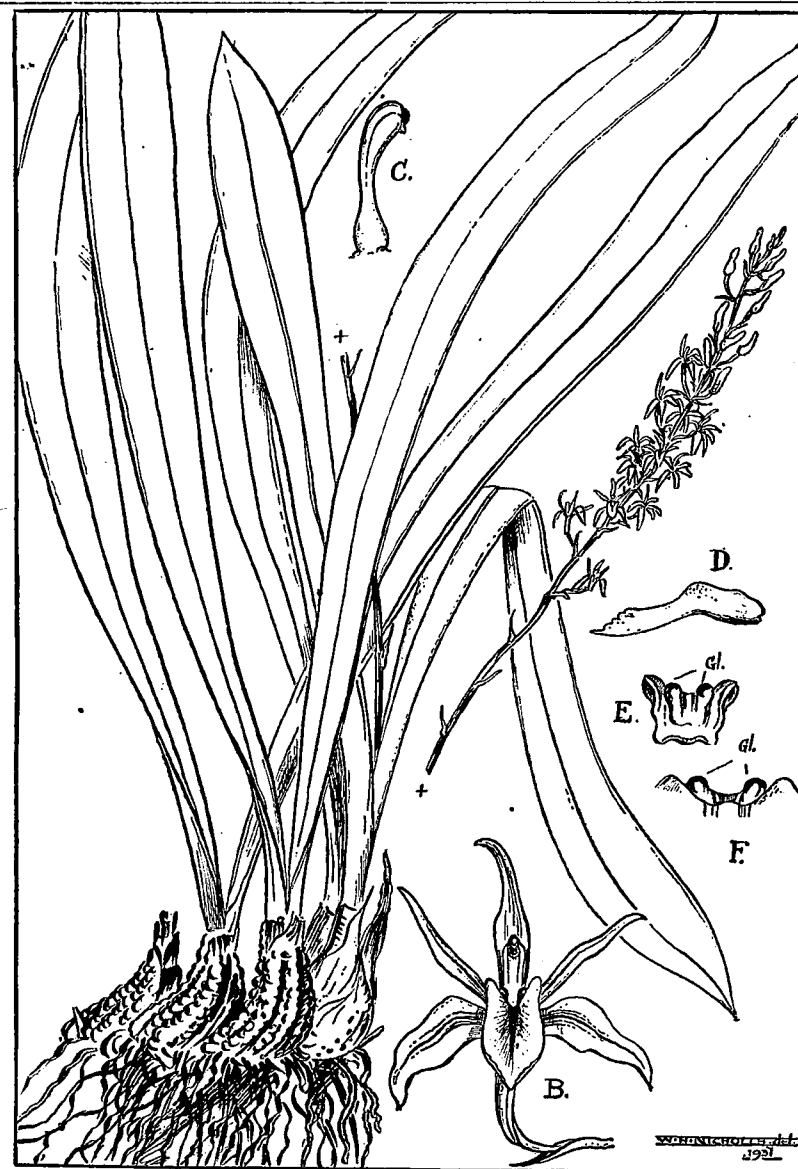
‡ Extr. from a letter from Dr. R. S. Rogers, 6/8/37.

MOSSES IN NORTH QUEENSLAND.

By H. N. DIXON, M.A., F.L.S.

The Bryology of North Queensland is of particular interest to botanists, in part because of what has been found, and in part because of what may be found. A number of endemic mosses have been found of quite peculiar interest, but of perhaps more importance are some that indicate the relationship of its flora with that of other regions, and so throw light on the origin of the Australian

flora. There is no doubt that this flora is related definitely to the subantarctic flora of New Zealand; this may be exemplified by the finding of *Dicnemoloma Sieberianum* at Ravenhoe (distribution, N.S.W., Tasmania, N.Z.); *Fissidens pallidus* H.F. et W., *Tortella calycina* Schwaegr. (extending to Chile), *Trachyloma planifolium*, Hook, *Acanthocladium extenuatum*, Brid. with a very similar dis-



LIPARIS FLECKERI.

Fig. A—Typical specimen.

B—A Flower.

C—Column from Side.

D—Labellum from Side.

Fig. E—Glands on Labellum-Lamina from Rear.

F—Glands on Labellum-Lamina as seen from Front.

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tribution. These may be confidently assumed to have reached North Queensland by way of N.S.W. and Eastern Australian generally. On the other hand species like *Garckea phascoides*, Hook., *Leucobryum sanctum*, Brid., *Syrhropodon croceus*, Mitt., *S. Muelleri* Doz. et Molk., *S. undulatus* Doz. et Molk., *Anomobryum cymbifolium*, Lindb., *Myurium rufescens*, Hornsch. et Reinw., *Meteorium Miquelianum*, C.M., *Barbella enervis*, Thw. et Mitt., *Taxithelium papillatum*, Harv., etc., all widely distributed in Indo-Malaya, and finding their most southerly Australian limit in North Queensland, are certainly invaders from the north.

Among the more interesting N. Queensland mosses have been a few from Mt. Bellenden Ker, showing a marked connection with the New Guinea moss flora. A more intensive collecting there, and on other high ground in the district would almost certainly give further data for the problems of geographical distribution.

Some recent collections by members of the N. Queensland Naturalists' Club, particularly those by Miss Elizabeth Henry from Millaa Millaa, S. Egan from Kuranda, and Dr. H. Flecker from Mt. Bellenden Ker and the Upper Mossman River area have had some quite interesting results. They include such endemic species as *Mullerobryum*, *Rhizogonium brevifolium* Broth., *Garovaglia longicuspis*, Broth., etc., as well as a number of species new to Australia, some of special interest, as *Claopodium assurgens*, Sull. et Lesq., which here finds its most southerly limit of distribution, *Syrhropodon Kindelli* Broth. et Par., only known from New Caledonia (unless *S. parvicaulis* C.M. from New Guinea be the same thing), etc.

Another interesting plant, *Macromitrium diaphanum* C.M., confined to Queensland and N.S.W., is one of the most peculiar species of this large genus. The specific name refers to the hyaline hair-point and its widened base, in itself an unusual feature in the genus. These greyish hairs give the plant a distinct resemblance to *Grimmia*, in the field. The colouring in the dry state is remarkable, the la-

mina of the leaf a strikingly glaucous green, the back of the nerve a rather bright yellow, and the hair-point grey or whitish. The specific name is rather unexpected, perhaps, in view of the fact that it has probably the most opaque leaf of any species of *Macromitrium*. The lamina is, in fact, 2-3-stratose in the upper part, a character which appears to have escaped notice hitherto, and the superficial cells, on each surface of the leaf, are tipped with strong, bifid papillae. It is this, no doubt, which causes the opacity of the leaf, as also its glaucous colour (when dry) by reflected light.

One of the most interesting plants collected is a new species of *Mesochaete*, a very peculiar, almost anomalous genus, hitherto considered to include two species only, and of a very limited distribution (Eastern Australia, Lord Howe I. and New Caledonia); it is also peculiar in structure. It is in fact so unrelated to any other genus that it is one of the very few genera that I have to look up in the index to find its place. It is, however, with little doubt, most nearly related to *Rhizogonium*. *M. undulata* is known from Queensland, and the new species resembles it closely in habit and in most structural points—it closely resembles a large species of *Fissidens* in general appearance, but with a stout, woody stem.—The main, and perhaps the only difference, so far as vegetative characters go,—it has not been found in fruit—lies in the cell structure. The cells in *M. undulata* are very small and dense, with very little variation, ranging from 8 to 13 microns in diameter. In the new species they are more than twice the dimensions, 20-25 microns across a highly marked character. In general, it appears to be a more robust plant, but I have specimens of *M. undulata* equally large.

I hope some time to publish a detailed account of these plants, but it is much to be desired that in the meantime further collections may be made, which will undoubtedly enrich the moss flora of Queensland and of Australia.