

# AN ACCOUNT OF THE EASTER EXCURSION OF MEMBERS OF THE FIELD NATURALISTS' SECTION TO EUMUNDI.

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By F. M. BAILEY, F.L.S.

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[Read before the Royal Society of Queensland, 21st April, 1894.]

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It will be in the recollection of many of the members of this Society, that in former years when the outings of the Field Naturalists' Section were more frequent than they have been of late, it was the custom to read a short account of each excursion at the following monthly meeting. This was especially the case when objects of more than ordinary interest had been observed or new species discovered. It was a good rule, for it gave members who could not accompany the excursion party an opportunity of hearing and seeing some little of what had been accomplished. Thus it has been considered that a few words about the most interesting of the plants met with by the party who took advantage of the Easter holidays this year for a few days' collecting at Eumundi, might be read at this evening's meeting.

Two new trees were met with; the first a new Quandong, *Elæocarpus Eumundi*—so named because, as far as at present known, it would seem confined to that district. It forms a rather handsome tree of medium size. The leaves seem more coriaceous than other Australian species of the genus. In form they are lanceolate or oblong-lanceolate, and from 3 to 5 inches long, and 1 to 1½ inch broad in the middle; the stalks (petioles), 1½ to 2 inches. The margins are entire, or with a few distant, more or less prominent blunt teeth in the upper half of the leaf; the apex often elongated but obtuse. The young growth, petioles and midrib, more or less clothed with appressed short grey hairs; these sometimes also being found sparsely scattered over the



underside of the leaf. Inflorescence lateral, on the two years' old wood. Racemes seldom exceeding in length 2 inches, the pedicels about  $\frac{1}{2}$  inch; drupe blue, oval,  $\frac{3}{4}$  inch long, the pericarp juicy, sharply acid; stone deeply pitted, containing 1 or 2 seeds.

The second was a species of *Sideroxylon*, which, having been met with upon Mount Eerwah, has been named *S. Eerwah*. The tree is one of medium size, but only loose leaves and very early and fully matured fruit were obtained. From such meagre material it might be considered unsafe to found a species. They, however, differ considerably from all the other Australian species of the genus, so may well bear a distinctive name. The leaves closely approach those of *S. obovata*, being obovate or broadly elliptical, obtuse, decurrent upon the petiole, and, including the latter, measure about 5 inches in length, with a breadth of about  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches at the broadest part. The pedicels are glabrous, and from 3 to 4 lines long; calyx-segments obtuse, nearly orbicular, glabrous, except for the ragged membranous margins being ciliated, about 1 line in diameter. Ovary with a dense ring of glossy-brown hairs at its base, the rest part glabrous. Ripe fruit of a reddish-purple colour, oval, but often tapering much towards the base, and thus becoming pear-shaped, 2 to  $2\frac{1}{2}$  inches long, containing 1 or 2 seeds; the 2-seeded fruits much compressed. Seeds, when there are two in a fruit, shaped like a cowrie-shell, from  $\frac{3}{4}$  to  $1\frac{1}{4}$  inch long; hilum broad, the length of the seed. What is wanting in the above description can be added when material is at hand to furnish it.

During this excursion the Australian *Bursera* was frequently met with in full fruit; the tree was found to be by no means rare in the locality, but no local name seems to have been given it. This species was first discovered by two of our members while botanising in the district in 1892, but their specimens were obtained from a bough which had been blown down by the wind. From the better specimens now obtained, the description given in Botany Bulletin V. 8, may be extended and revised in the following particulars:—Tree comparatively large, shedding its bark in hard, thick, woody scales somewhat similar to the Red Cedar and some Yellow-woods. Leaflets often 7; the larger ones attaining the length of 4 inches, on petiolules of 9 lines, the common petiole often 2 inches long. Drupe with, when fully ripe, a very juicy epicarp.



Good fruit-bearing specimens were also obtained of *Sideroxylon myrsinoides*, *Macadamia Youngiana*, *Polyosma Cunninghamii*, and *Schizomeria ovata*. The last is well worthy of the settler's attention as a preserving fruit. It is about the size of a large cherry, the stone small and the flesh having a sharp acid flavour. I will not take up time to speak of the many other plants observed.

Hoping that this short notice will show that the Field Naturalists' section of your Society are fully alive to the importance of working up the natural history of the colony and whenever holidays occur and the weather is suitable, are found ready for a day or so in the bush.

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## EXHIBIT OF A BUNYA NODULE ; WITH EXPLANATORY REMARKS.

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THE curious specimen of wood exhibited this evening is one of those eccentric growths found in the bark of trees, and known botanically as "nodules." The present one was taken from the bark of a Bunya tree. I have not observed them in any other of our native trees, but the Hon. A. C. Gregory tells me that in Western Australia they are found in the bark of a Eucalypt. In other parts of the world they are found in the bark of the Beech, Cedar and Olive. My object in bringing the present exhibit under your notice this evening is the belief that these wood formations have a value, and would if better known find a ready market in Europe for cutting into veneers. It could not be recommended that these magnificent trees should be cut down for the sake of the nodules, but when these woody formations are contained in the bark of fallen trees, they might be collected for the purpose above stated.



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