

On the road... *...with APC10*



A Far North Queensland journey.
Photos: Russ Grayson
www.pacific-edge.info



On the road with APC10 in North Queensland

In late 2010, permaculture designer-practitioners gathered at Kuranda on the Atherton Tableland in Far North Queensland for their biannual congress.

A highlight of permaculture convergences are the tours that follow them. The post-APC10 tour took us to ethnobotanic forest of The Botanical Ark (treated in another book) and to a number of rural properties on the Tableland. We also visited the fruitful home garden of permaculture practitioner, Bruce Zell, down on the coast in Cairns.

These were inspiring and revealing places to visit. For those of us from the southern states the tours provided insight into how people live and grow some of what they eat in the tropics. For some of us, to look at the wealth of unusual tropical fruit in people's gardens was to look in envy.

In this photobook I include images that may bring back happy memories for those fortunate enough to have joined the tours and to show those unable to attend a few of the sites that we on the tours were fortunate enough to see.

...Russ Grayson, Sydney. <http://pacific-edge.info>



Suburban home...

The tour group tackles a more-than-plentiful morning tea below the house's solar hot water system... you can't hear the chatter, but it was profuse.

Energy efficient, comfortable and with an extensive home garden, this is a productive place. Supported by a rock wall is the vegetable garden.



Veges, close to the house...

A design principle in permaculture is to locate the vegetable garden close to the house where its abundance is easily accessible. You couldn't get much closer than this vegetable and herb garden. The householders grow slower growing and larger vegetables a little further from the house as they are visited less often for maintenance and harvest.



Your own waterhole...

The pond is large and is home to a diversity of water plants.

Ponds of any size provide habitat for insects, amphibians like frogs and other wildlife. As components of home and community gardens, ponds provide a design element for establishing the insect food web which is of great use in managing pest insects - those that feed on our vegetables and fruit.



In the garden... a dwarf coconut tree.



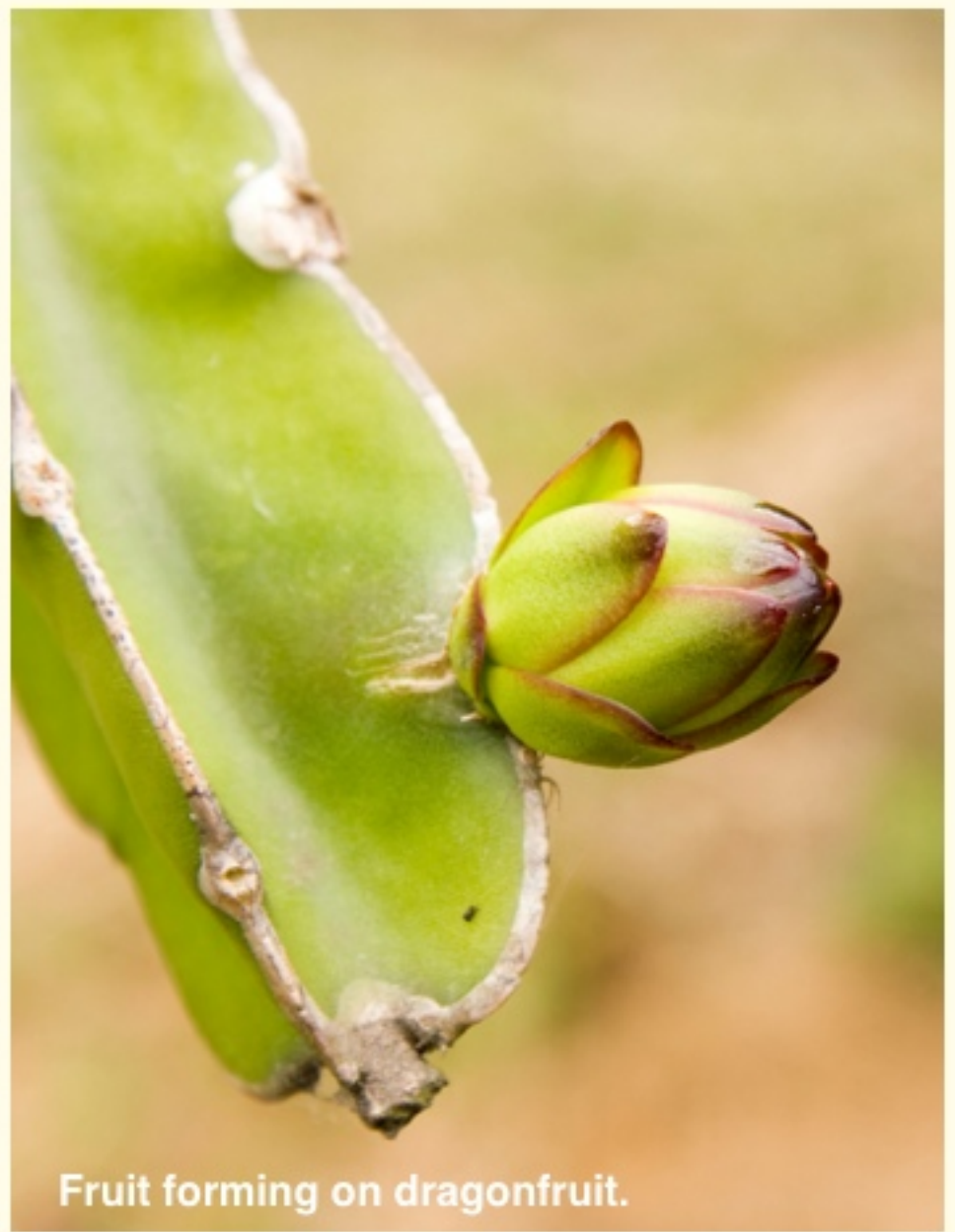
The coconuts are not dwarfed.



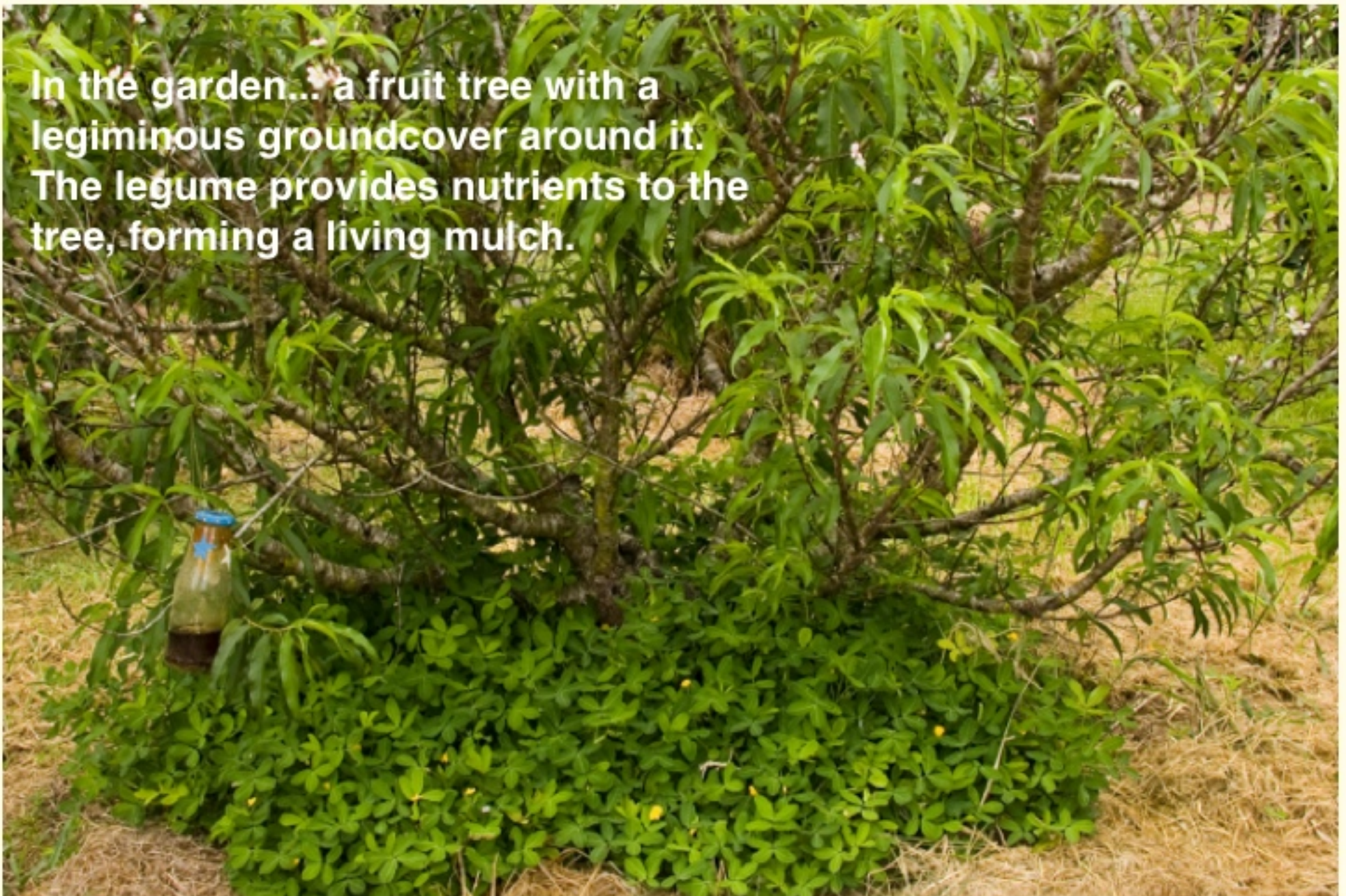
Pawpaw is a fruit of the tropics to warm temperate regions. It is eaten raw grated green and immature onto salad or eaten as a mature fruit.



Dragonfruit, a cactus with edible fruit.



Fruit forming on dragonfruit.



In the garden... a fruit tree with a leguminous groundcover around it. The legume provides nutrients to the tree, forming a living mulch.



Prickly pear...

Prickly pear is a succulent—a member of the cactus family—that produces edible flower buds. The large fleshy leaf structures are cooked and eaten.



Ant house...

Ants have created their own habitat by assembling leaves into a spherical cluster. A clever piece of bioengineering by our multi-legged friends (friends when they're a non-biting species, that is).



Non-edibles too...

There's always room for non-edibles in the permaculture garden.

Here, a groundcover of luscious grass slowly colonises available space.



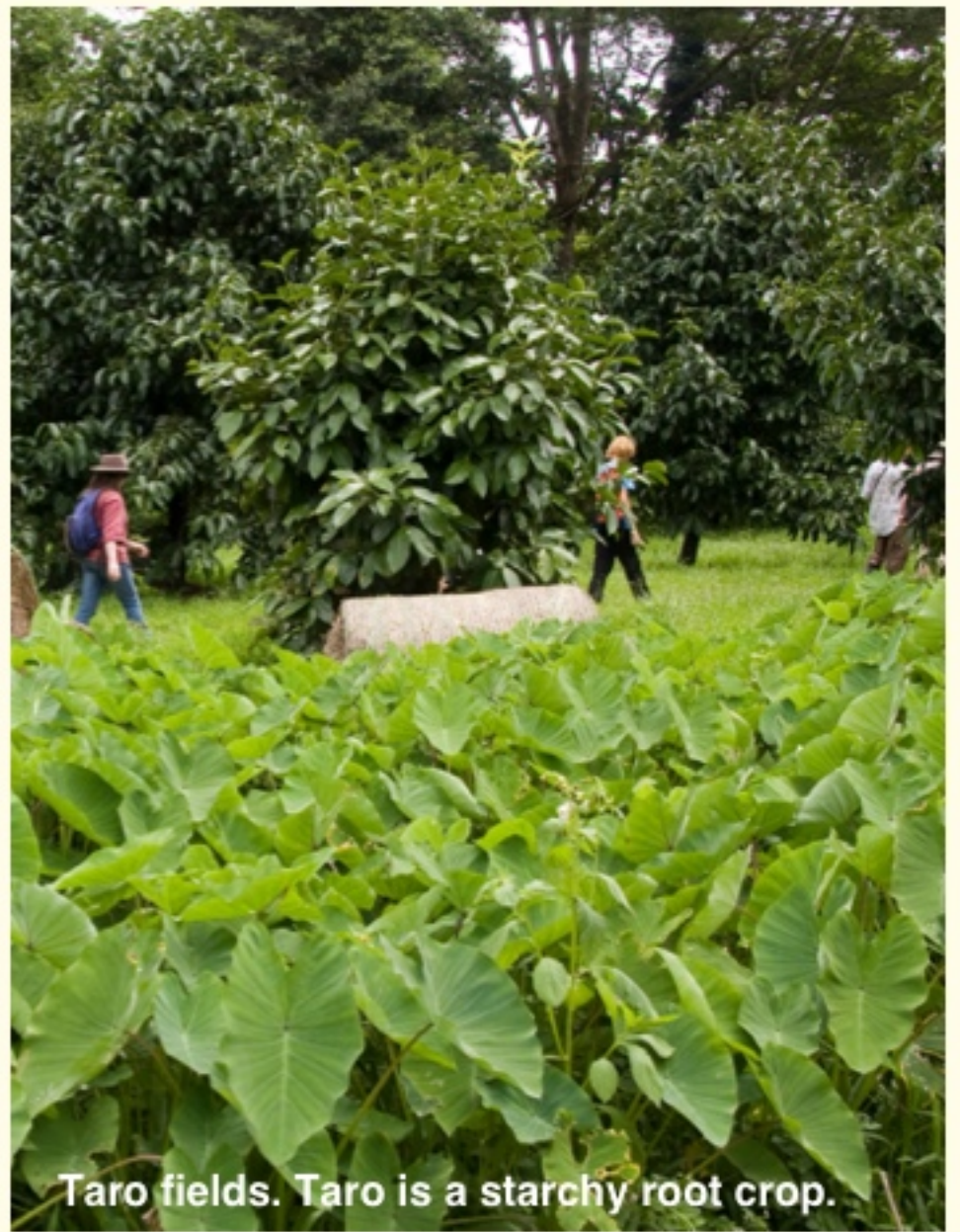
A commercial, mixed farm growing taro and tropical fruit was another stop on our tour. The farmer, at left, shows us pomelo, a large, juicy citrus, while Gillian, above, checks out the taro field.

Below, taro and tropical fruit trees grow in close association in the moist climate





Taro corms freshly planted out.



Taro fields. Taro is a starchy root crop.



New Zealand permaculture educator and author, Robina McCurdy, trudges through the fruit forest.



Tropical fruits...

These are crunchy, tasty fruit eaten raw... members of the littypilly family of fruits (Syzygium).

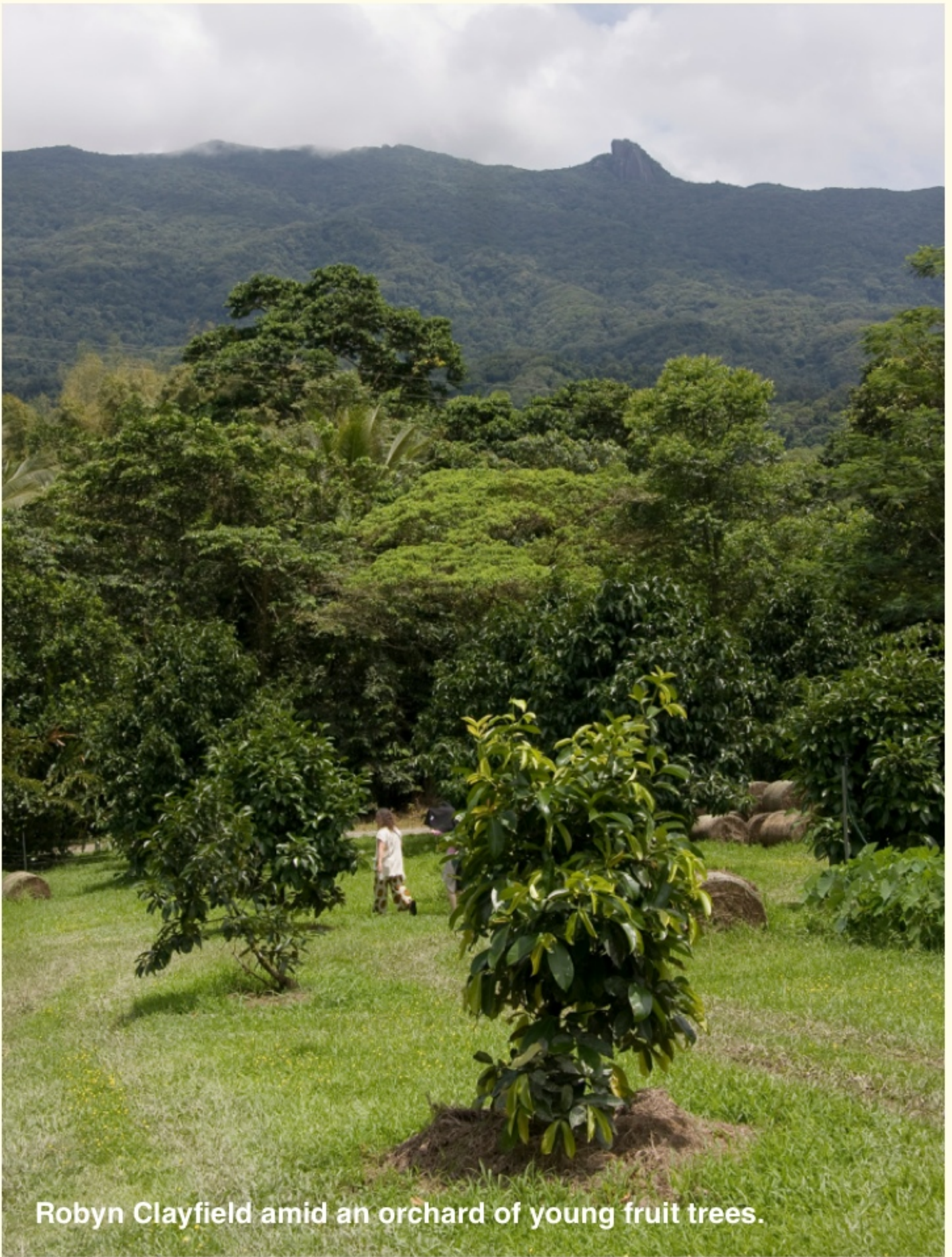
Similar species occur in variety across Australia and South East Asia, with some species found in South America.



Ready to pick & eat...



A forager at large in the orchard.



Robyn Clayfield amid an orchard of young fruit trees.



The breadfruit tree yields a large fruit.



**Above: Breadfruit.
Below: The author grazing on
pomelo amid the fruit trees.**



Woman with pomelo.





Beck documents...

Clearly a believer in the idea that you need photos to remind you of where you have been and what you saw there, Beck Lowe points her camera at a bunch of fruit in Bruce's garden.



Lunch at last...

Food was fuel and tasty sustenance for the tour group and what better lunch could you have in Cairns than fresh, tropical fruit.

For garden designer Cecilia Macauley, it was time for some tasty tropical treats.



That's bassella on the left and below, also known as Malabar or Ceylon spinach. You eat it cooked.

This is a small garden of edibles behind Kuranda market.







Christian takes a bite of crunchy Syzygium.



Spider family