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Sketch of *Bauhinia blakeana* Hong Kong Orchid Tree

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PARK AND RECREATION ADMINISTRATION
FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DES SERVICES DES ESPACES VERTS ET DE LA RECREATION
INTERNATIONALE ORGANISATION ÖFFENTLICHER VERWALTUNGEN FÜR GRÜNFLÄCHEN UND ERHOLUNG

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THE HONG KONG ORCHID TREE (*Bauhinia blakeana*)

The genus 'Bauhinia' embraces a family of remarkably diverse trees, shrubs and climbers found in tropical or sub tropical climates both north and south of the equator.

With their orchid-like flowers and curious 'camel's foot' leaves, most tend to be a source of curiosity rather than strong landscape features. However two of the tree species do form features in their own right and are much valued by plantsmen. These are *Bauhinia purpurea* and *Bauhinia blakeana*.

Bauhinia purpurea, which is found in India, Burma, Vietnam and South China, has both the largest flowers and leaves in the family. Its intense purple flowers are the subject of much admiration though the tree itself tends to be untidy in shape and therefore of limited value.

Bauhinia blakeana 'The Hong Kong Orchid Tree', though listed as a separate species, is of mysterious origin. The first tree was discovered near the ruins of a house on the seashore of Hong Kong Island in 1908 by the Fathers of the French Mission at Pok Fu Lam. It was named after Sir Henry Blake, Governor of Hong Kong from 1898 to 1903 who was also a keen botanist. By coincidence the current IFPRA President-elect lives on the site of the original tree.

Though believed, initially, to be a mutation of *B. purpurea*, *B. blakeana* possesses a number of distinctive characteristics in both flower and leaf form which give doubt to this theory. Though fast growing, *B. blakeana* rarely exceeds 6 metres in height and is characterised by a twisted stem and long, spreading drooping branches on which can be seen a profusion of orchid-like flowers. These flowers consist of 5 spreading and unequal petals in colours varying from carmine red to burgundy - but a deep pink hue is dominant. The fifth petal of each flower is striped purple, thus emphasising the orchid-like appearance. *B. blakeana* is sterile, the flowers never maturing into fruit or seed. Propagation is by top grafting onto root stock of *B. purpurea*.

Because of its fragrant and large colourful flowers, blooming in early winter and early summer, *B. blakeana* is unequalled in the genus, and is therefore much valued for its ornamental qualities though its brittle branches suffer from storm damage. Today the progeny of the lone tree in Pok Fu Lam can be found 'en masse' throughout South China, also in Queensland, Australia and elsewhere.

B. blakeana was formally adopted as the floral emblem of Hong Kong in 1965 and features in both the Government and Urban Council Coat-of-Arms. A stylised version also constitutes the logo of the Urban Council and has even been copied by a major city in the United Kingdom! When Hong Kong reverts to China in 1997 the *Bauhinia* will again form the emblem of the territory. This time it will symbolise the new Special Administrative Region with a small star located on each lobe of the distinctive magenta flower. Rarely has a solitary tree received more prominence in such a short time and from such humble beginnings!

Roger Pollard
President-elect
IFPRA

Editorial

As the HONG KONG CONGRESS draws near (18-24 October) many IFPRA members will be planning to attend and I am sure that they will have a most enjoyable and professionally rewarding experience. No trouble is being spared to make this Congress a most memorable occasion for all delegates and accompanying persons. If by some mischance you have not yet received your Congress Brochure, please write to Roger Pollard, Conference Chairman, 1992 IFPRA World Congress Secretariat, G/F Block, S-4 Kowloon Park, Haiphong Road, Tsim Sha Tsui, Kowloon, Hong Kong. Roger would be most pleased to send a copy by return mail.

Included in this Circular is an article on Hong Kong Town Parks contributed by Farley Ma. Farley sent some magnificent colour photos of the parks, but unfortunately because of space and cost constraints, they could not be used; I'm sure those who take part in the IFPRA Congress will not want to miss seeing the delightful Town Parks.

The new Memorandum and Articles of Association (M&As) for IFPRA are now under active discussion and hopefully will be adopted during the World Commission meeting in Hong Kong. As the Federation gains in stature and in numbers, it is necessary to have up-to-date laws governing its operation into the 21st century.

Do not forget to mark the IFPRA Asia Pacific Congress down in your diary now. It is to be held in Mito City, Japan from May 11-15 1993. The Japanese Chapter of IFPRA, the Parks and Recreation Foundation and the Parks and Open Space Association of Japan are hard at work preparing the final details of this historic Congress, being the first held in an Asian country. I am sure they will provide all delegates with a most memorable experience.

Please note - short articles, and news items are required for the September Circular!

Trevor Arthur

Royal Australian Institute of Parks and Recreation
- Annual Conference Hobart, Tasmania, 4-9 October 1992
- Heritage Management - Parks, Heritage and Tourism

An interesting and exciting Conference is to be held in Hobart, the capital city of Tasmania, our island state. For all non-Australian members, enclosed please find a copy of the Registration Brochure for your consideration.

Floods in Hong Kong in May

Following record rains in Hong Kong, 55" (1375mm) falling to the middle of May. After a very wet Thursday 7 May, 16" (416mm) of rain fell on Friday causing severe damage and some loss of life in the Colony. Our President-elect's apartment block was damaged. No doubt, many of you saw the serious flooding on TV. However only one park was damaged. Farley Ma wrote to say that only the Hong Kong Park was affected where 250m of access road was damaged. He attributes the park design and excellent drainage systems installed in the parks for the lack of any additional damage.

HONG KONG TOWN PARKS

* Farley Ma

Introduction

The rapid development of new towns has led to an unprecedented shift in the demographic distribution pattern of Hong Kong in recent years. Regarded only a few years ago as mainly rural countryside, the New Territories are now home to more than two million people.

With the continuing migration of residents into the new towns, public recreation and amenities have become one of the immediate concerns for people living there. Among the various recreational facilities, the town park is a major open space development which to a very large extent, dominates the outlook of the new town. The role of the town park is important in the town planning process in that they not only cater for the recreation needs of their residents, but they also affect the future distribution of population and other developments in the area.

At present, there are four town parks located in Sha Tin, Yuen Long, Tuen Mun and North District respectively. They were completed and opened for public use between 1985 and 1991 and their size varies from 7.5 to 12.5 hectares. Each town park is unique, their design and type of facility provided well reflects the needs and character of that particular community.

Easy Accessibility

Easy accessibility is perhaps one of the key factors for the success of these town parks. They are located very near to the town centres. Therefore, they attract people to spend hours or even a day there after they have finished shopping. For example, Sha Tin Central Park is located by the Shing Mun River and is adjacent to the main shopping centre and many residential housing blocks. People can reach the park easily on foot. Similarly, Tuen Mun Town Park is linked by foot bridges neighbouring commercial areas in the north. Because of easy accessibility, high utilisation rates for the park facilities are achieved both day and night.

With planned development, the parks are often linked with other major cultural and recreation facilities such as swimming pools, indoor recreation centres, sports grounds, community halls and libraries. These together form a comprehensive cultural and recreation centre, thus providing more convenient and better environments for the residents.

* Principal Amenities Officer,
Regional Services Department
Hong Kong Government

Diversified Provision

To satisfy the needs and interests of all ages, facilities contained in town parks are very diversified and have a balanced provision of both active and passive recreational facilities. They include children's play areas, skating rink, model boat pool, ball games pitches, fitness trail, jogging track, amphitheatre, promenade, plaza, rest/landscape garden, aviary ... etc To allow flexibility in the use of space, often the ball games pitches are made multi-purpose, e.g. the soccer-cum-handball court in North District Central Park.

Given considerable site constraints, it is never easy to accommodate many different facilities within one park while at the same time maintaining harmony among various activities. It is indeed a very challenging task for our park designers and managers.

Mix of Western and Oriental Design in Sha Tin Central Park

Hong Kong has a good mix of both Western and Oriental culture which is reflected in the living style of the people and the parks they enjoy. Sha Tin Central Park is a typical example of this, its design blends together the beauty of the east and west. The Park has two Chinese gardens, namely the 'North Garden' and the 'South Garden'. They are characterised by typical Chinese enclosure walls, entrances, long and winding corridors, brightly coloured pavilions, waterfalls, rockeries, bridges and carefully designed Chinese landscape. The Chinese couplets displayed at the entrances of these gardens are another distinct feature of the park in which one can escape for a while from the hustle and bustle world outside, and forget that we are the first container port and the third financial centre of the world.

Furthermore, the Park has a 'Chinese Playground' which consists of a climbing wall resembling the Great Wall in China.

For western design, the park has a 'Western Playground' equipped with European Fort, embankment slides, wooden play equipment and sand pit. It is a popular playground for the school children nearby. At the centre of the park is the Main Plaza with western style fountains, pools and an amphitheatre - an ideal place for people to meet and for outdoor performances. During holidays, the main plaza is always crowded with people and you will often hear children's joyful laughter.

Cultural Centre

Apart from providing general recreation facilities, town parks also serve as cultural exchange centres. Open spaces of the parks such as the amphitheatre, plaza or Artist Corner, provide excellent venues for conducting public entertainment, musical performances, exhibitions, gathering and for international events such as the Hong Kong Flower Show. Furthermore, the holding of public meetings in parks is becoming more and more common under the changing political environment in Hong Kong.

Extensive Plantings

One of the very important characteristics of town parks is the extensive planting of trees and shrubs in the park area, as well as on roof tops and, of course, existing mature trees are preserved at the design stage. The building up of an extensive 'green' area in the town centre not only helps to soften the nearby concrete buildings but also provides a tranquil environment for the park users. Moreover, plants were carefully selected and planted so that they would provide scenic views. For example, in Sha Tin Central Park, there are 110,000 plants of over 400 species, some of them being rarely found in Hong Kong.

The Way Forward

With the rapidly expanding population expected to reach 3 million by 1996/97 in the New Territories, which is half of the total population of Hong Kong, the need to reserve more open space is vital for those who live in apartment blocks (which are usually very small) to visit nearby parks and stretch themselves. As such, there are current plans for the government to provide more town parks in the proposed new towns during the next five years. These new parks will add about 50 hectares of open space development. With better and more modern facilities, these parks will surely continue to provide a better and more comfortable living environment for the people of Hong Kong.

AERIAL VIEW OF SHA TIN CENTRAL PARK



New Members

We have much pleasure in welcoming new members to the Federation. It is exciting that even in these times of severe recession, we are still increasing in numbers. It is especially rewarding if a new country is represented for the first time, so a very special welcome to two new members listed in the last Circular - Parks and Recreation Department, Guam, and Mr J Bilga, India as well as two members from Thailand, Mr B. Stansakul and Mr S-A K. Panaporsirikul-Bulyalert, are listed below:

Mr Peter Luff
9 Templetonia Ave, Sorrento WA 6020 Australia

Mr Peter Maxwell
P O Box 1020, Frankston Vic 3199 Australia

Mr W Y Cheung
Urban Services Department, Leisure Policy Division,
Queensway Government Offices, 42/F 66 Queensway Hong Kong
(correction to initials in last Circular)

Kar Wo Fertiliser and Seed Company
Machine Division, 175 Sai Yeung Choi Street, 1/F Kowloon,
Hong Kong

Fukuokaken Municipal Park & Urban Improvement Public
Corporation, 10-1 Tenjin 1-Chome, Chuo-Ku, Fukuoka City, 810
Japan

Mr Naosuke Koizumi
1-10-18 Takaido-Nishi, Suginami-Ku, Tokyo 168, Japan

National Recreation Association of Japan (Mr Y. Tsubouchi,
President) 3-17-11 Sendagaya, Shibuya-ku, Tokyo 151, Japan

Osaka Association of Parks & Urban Greenery
(Mr M Shimizu, Chairman) 13-2 Terauchi 1-Chome, Toyonaka
560, Japan

Mr Kunie Sugio
Exec. Director, PREC Institute Co. Ltd, New Life Ichibancho
Building, 4-5 Ichibancho, Chiyoda-Ku, Tokyo Japan

Mr Boonyakit Stansakul
Bangkok Metropolitan Admin. City Hall, Dinso Road, Bangkok
10200 Thailand

Mr Soy-Angkoon Panaporsirikul-Bulyalert
Bangkok Metropolitan Admin. City Hall, Dinso Road, Bangkok
10200 Thailand

Seminar on Therapy and Rehabilitation through Horticulture

The Victorian College of Agriculture and Horticulture-Burnley Campus will be hosting a Seminar dealing with the use of horticulture for therapy and rehabilitation with the use of September 21st to 23rd, 1992. Topics include projects from client needs, landscape design elements, plant investigating scheduling, horticultural programming, funding selection and opportunities for employment for disabled persons. sources and set aside for a tour of active horticultural programs in metropolitan Melbourne. One day is equipment, tools, aids and books. There will be an exhibition of \$200.00 or daily registration of \$75.00. Full registration fee is from Dr D.E. Aldous on (03) 810.8800 Australia. Further information

RETIREMENT OF RALPH BOGGUST
IFPRA Commissioner - New Zealand

Ralph Boggust, the IFPRA Commissioner for New Zealand, recently retired as Manager, Parks and Civic Areas, Manukau City, a position he held for over 25 years.

Ralph commenced his career with Duncan and Davies Ltd, New Plymouth the leading nurserymen in New Zealand at that time, and gained a good horticultural knowledge of both exotic and native plants. In the early 1950s he trained at the Royal Botanic Gardens, Edinburgh, Scotland, followed by a short period in Holland.

On his return to New Zealand, Ralph gained further experience with Andersons Nurseries, Napier and R.E. Harrison, Palmerston North where he held a senior position in their Tree and Shrub Department.

In 1960 he accepted a position as Landscape Officer with the Ministry of Works in Hamilton and was involved in the refurbishment with native plants of the hydro electricity sites of the Waikato River and in the Bay of Plenty, as well as other landscaping developments for secondary schools, government buildings and highways in the Hamilton and Auckland areas.

He commenced with Manukau City in 1966 and during his employment he was heavily involved in the dramatic growth of this new city from a 1966 population of 60,000 to 230,000 in 1991. A parks network was established, and a full Parks Department built up during this period. The developments created and community projects generated were the envy of many of the larger municipalities in NZ.

Those delegates fortunate enough to have attended the 1986 IFPRA Congress in Auckland, New Zealand, will remember with pleasure the short time spent in Manukau City during the field trip, inspecting the wonderful Fun Pool at Mangere and the magnificent Rugby Clubrooms and Historic Village at Lloyd Elsmore Park, Pakuranga.

Ralph is retiring to Leigh, a small coastal settlement north of Auckland, where he has built a home and will devote his early retirement years to establish a garden and enjoy a life free from community demands.

The new Manager of Parks and Civic Areas in Manukau is John Revell, who was previously employed as an Assistant Superintendent prior to attending Lincoln University to gain a Bachelor of Parks & Recreation Administration.

Ralph will continue in the short term to be involved with IFPRA as New Zealand's representative and will be delivering a paper at the Hong Kong Congress on the current parks and recreation situation in New Zealand following the recent dramatic local government re-organisations.

New Zealand Institute of Parks & Recreation Administration Annual Conference - 'Visions : Past and Future'

The Conference is due to be held in Hastings N.Z. on 29-30 September 1992; a most interesting and diverse program has been planned for the interest and entertainment of delegates. A number of top professional speakers from NZ and other countries will provide stimulating sessions for all delegates. Further information is available from our IFPRA member, Mr Thomas Looy, Conference Convenor, Hastings District Council, Private Bag L001J, Hastings, New Zealand.

INTERNATIONAL FEDERATION OF PARK AND RECREATION ADMINISTRATION
1993 ASIA PACIFIC CONGRESS
and
PARKS AND OPEN SPACE ASSOCIATION OF JAPAN
35th ANNUAL CONGRESS

To be held at Mito City Japan 11-15 May 1993

The Congress is to be held jointly with POSAJ which is celebrating the 120th anniversary of the Japanese Public Park System.

Host Organisations:

- Ministry of Construction
- Parks and Open Space Association of Japan (POSAJ)
- Parks and Recreation Foundation (PRF)
- Ibaraki Prefecture, Mito City and IFPRA Japan

Supporting Organisations:

Other public and private corporations/organisations will be supporting the aims and objectives of the Congress.

There is less than one year before the opening of the Congress in Mito City. The Congress Planning and Co-ordination Committee has had several meetings and has developed the theme for the Congress which is "Park Dynamism - Park and Recreation Administration Providing for Creative Life Styles". The Committee has prepared a preliminary program which is set out below. The final program is due out at the end of August.

PRELIMINARY PROGRAM

MAY 11 (Tuesday)

- Opening Ceremony
- Greeting
- Key Lecture
- Special Lecture
- Parks and Open Space Association of Japan 35th Annual Meeting
- Reception

MAY 12 (Wednesday)

- Field Visits
(Hitachi Seaside National Government Park, Urban Greenery Fair)
- Welcome Party (Host: Ibaraki Prefecture)
- IFPRA Asia Pacific Commission Meeting

MAY 13 (Thursday)

- Main Session:
"Park Dynamism - Park and Recreation Administration Providing for Creative Life Styles"
- Panel Discussion
- Civic Reception (Host: Mito City)

MAY 14 (Friday)

- Session 1: "Roles of Park Planning and Recreation"
- Session 2: "Development of New Park Management System"
- Study Visits (Tsukuba Science City, Mt Tsukuba and Kasama district)

MAY 15 (Saturday)

- Session 1: "Roles of Park Planning and Recreation"
- Session 2: "Development of New Park Management System"
- IFPRA Asia Pacific General Assembly of Members
- Banquet (Dinner/Dance)

POST CONGRESS TOURS starting May 16 : the following will be organised:

- (a) Tokyo, Kamakura and Hakone for 2 nights 3 days
- (b) Tokyo, Kyoto and Kobe for 3 nights 4 days
- (c) Tokyo, Fukuoka and Nagasaki for 3 nights 4 days

CONGRESS VENUE Ibaraki Kyoiku Kaikan and Mito Plaza Hotel in Mito City, Ibaraki-Ken, Japan

BACKGROUND OF SETTING OF THE THEME

Today, amidst the worldwide urbanisation of society, many difficult environmental problems have arisen which must be tackled to improve the quality of life of the residents and improve their environment. As part of the worldwide movement for better human and environmental conditions, the IFPRA Asia Pacific Region draws attention to the problems of the serious degradation of the environment and the consequential effect on human health and happiness. Parks, gardens, tree-lined streets, and green open spaces provide significant physical and mental benefits to the community, as well as reducing pollution and creating an awareness of the need for society to become environmentally concerned.

Many urban residents are becoming aware of the need for higher quality living and recreational needs at this time of active social and economic changes. A creative lifestyle based on a community and globally oriented philosophy needs to be developed to provide the community with the impetus to achieve a better society and a high quality sustainable environment. This will help to achieve a comfortable living environment with amenities and the revitalisation of the community.

The Congress Committee has suggested that this new awareness can be developed through the 'Park Dynamism' theme by establishing a new system or mechanism of Park and Recreation Administration, which will assist in providing creative lifestyles for members of our communities in all areas of the Asia Pacific Region.

Kanzo Hirano
Executive Director
IFPRA Japan

AMENITY TREE EVALUATION SEMINAR SERIES IN AUSTRALIA

Developed by the Standards Association of Australia, working in conjunction with the Royal Australian Institute of Parks and Recreation (Inc.), this seminar will visit Australian capital cities except Darwin. Topics include the methodology of tree evaluation, the impact of trees on the community and heritage, local government and urban planning, judgements on construction projects and considerations on litigation about trees. The draft amenity tree evaluation standard will be put forward for discussion. The aim is to achieve a National Standard for Australia and, if successful, will be one of the world's first National Standards. The Melbourne venue will be the VCAH-Burnley Hall, Swan Street, Richmond, to be held on July 30th, 1992. Further information on venues and dates in other States and Territories should be obtained from Mr Trevor Watts, Standards Australia on telephone (02) 963-4111 or Fax (02) 959-3896.