



Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind

- November 2011 -

Whether it is inter-monsoonal precipitation or the beginnings of the north-east monsoon that has brought the change about, we have been experiencing some very heavy (and very welcome!) rain. It keeps the existing vegetation green and helps in the establishment of new plant material. Among the latter is the continuing establishment of a live fence of *Bougainvillea* around the field that surrounds HPH. How lovely the “finished product” is going to be can be judged by the first blossoms appearing on the maturing bushes which border the final stretch of road up to HPH. Providing a barrier to unwanted intrusion as well, it is going to be the ideal combination of beauty and practicality!

One of the Flemish van der Poortens paid us a visit and proceeded to propose, on bended knee, to his partner in the dining room in which Emil’s grandfather supped more than a century ago. He chose this location, half a world away from his Belgian homeland, because of the respect he had for the pioneering spirit and accomplishments of Antoine Joseph van der Poorten who established the family in Sri Lanka more than a century and a half ago. This is certainly one of the more unusual events that we have hosted at HPH!

As I write this, the *Tabebuia serratifolia* is displaying its brilliant yellow blossoms outside my window. Pity that it lasts such a short time but then if it lasted much longer one might be tempted to take it, God forbid, for granted!



Photo courtesy of Forest and Kim Starr

We seem to have found a means of preventing the giant and flying squirrels and monkeys from decimating our King Coconut crop and we have begun harvesting this coconut that produces the closest thing to an elixir. Not so long ago, we wouldn’t have thought this possible, but, by dint of persistence,

we have succeeded and our visitors are the beneficiaries of this accomplishment!

Arlene has made another batch of Lovi Lovi “wine” and we look forward to its maturing when we’ll, once again, be surprised by what a lovely drink this terribly acid fruit can produce. Just to confirm that fact, we will have on hand a supply of jelly made from the same fruit which will keep company with those produced from our home-grown guavas and nutmeg peel.

One of the benefits of living in the mid-country of a tropical country is the variety of food – basic stuff, jams, preserves and drinks – that one can produce with what grows so freely here. And the additional bonus is the fact that we can provide our guests with these drinks and food which they, otherwise, would not have had the chance to experience!

The bird life continues to gladden our days (and nights, in the case of the Devil Bird and some owls) and we look forward to the enhancement of this pleasure that the arrival of the migrants provides at this time of the year. The Black Eagles visit us regularly, settling on the trees near the front verandah—it’s a truly magnificent bird!



With November upon us, Christmas and the holidays are coming up fast and, the perfect place to be is Halgolla Plantation Home.

With warm wishes, Emil & Arlene

For information or to book your accommodation, contact us at:

Home phone: 94-81-380-8007; Mobile: 94-72-284-9770 or by email at emil@halgollaplantationhome.com

Upcoming events in the country

December

Christmas in the tropics! Colombo in particular gets all dolled up for Christmas. Though there's no snow and no cold, Santa, parties and Christmas shopping and cheer abound.

New Year's Eve is another event celebrated with great enthusiasm around the country.

Hot Air Balloon Rides at Dambulla and Sigiriya

Whale and Dolphin-Watching at Kalpitiya and Mirissa

Bird watching – the “migrants” have returned

White-water rafting at Kitulgala

January

The HSBC Galle Literary Festival

The 6th annual festival will be held 18th to 22nd January 2012 at Galle featuring a wide variety of local and international authors and other events.

Thai Pongal – January 15