



HPH Driveway

Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind

- February 2012 -

We've had absolutely unprecedented low temperatures in January, the lowest in almost a century, in most parts of the country. In the Kandyan Foothills, where HPH is located, this made for scurrying around in search of light blankets to keep our feet warm and our domestic help wearing light sweaters in the earlier hours of the day!



Cloves at various stages of the drying process

February is usually a dry month when the rubber trees (*Hevea brasiliensis*) shed their leaves in a manner that would be more appropriate in a more temperate climate in the Autumn of the year. That said, we can still lay claim to a quite attractive "wintering" of the rubber foliage in this month.

We will have a new and interesting footpath cleared and ready for visitors to amble along by the time this newsletter reaches you, providing access to the boulder-strewn stream with its canopy of forest trees and giant lianas that forms one boundary of our land and where we have set up a "spout bath." A little wild and a lot different to what one might usually encounter in this part of Sri Lanka!

While the varieties of birds around HPH continue to change, the numbers do not, with an increase in the population of

Pompadour Green Pigeons suggesting that several pairs are in the process of building – if that's the word for it! – their flimsy nests on the tall trees in our garden. A pair of Grey Hornbills has been making their cacophonous presence felt though there doesn't appear to be a dead tree large enough for them to nest in.

The wild pigs have succeeded in destroying several newly-planted banana "suckers" near the house, despite "Natta" our pint-sized, though very feisty, Heinz 57 attacking one and being tossed sky high by it! The porcine night forays have become a bit annoying by virtue of their destructiveness but we have little answer to the problem at the moment.



Chevrotain or Indian Mouse Deer

While I have always known there were Mouse Deer (Chevrotains) on our land I had never seen one of these very shy nocturnal animals until, when out for an evening walk on our approach road with a couple of Australian visitors, one went past us "like a bowling ball" and disappeared into the brush on the edge of the road. Interesting little creatures and very different indeed!

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

February

February 2: World Wetlands Day. Sri Lanka has 5 Ramsar Sites covering 32,372 hectares: Anavilundawa, Bundala, Kumana, Maduganga and Vankalai.

February 3-19: Druvinka (Arlene's daughter) presents an exhibition of her recent paintings at the Barefoot Gallery in Colombo.



February 4: Sri Lanka's Independence Day.

February 6-7: Navam Perahera at the Gangaramaya Temple in Colombo

February 15-20: Colombo Art Biennale – 5 days of art! In various locations around the city, art exhibits, workshops, talks and parties take place highlighting the art of Sri Lankans and international artists.

February 19: Colombo hosts the First Ironman 70.3 and 5150 series race at the Galle Face Green.

February 24-26: Colombo Fashion Week at the Hilton Colombo.

March

Cricket! England tour of Sri Lanka – March 26 in Galle and April 3 in Colombo

Did you know? Sri Lanka has been rated as a top tourist destination for 2011 and 2012.

Condé Nast Traveller

www.cntraveller.com/news/2011/december/destinations-to-watch-in-2012/sri-lanka

The New York Times

www.nytimes.com/2010/01/10/travel/10places.html

National Geographic

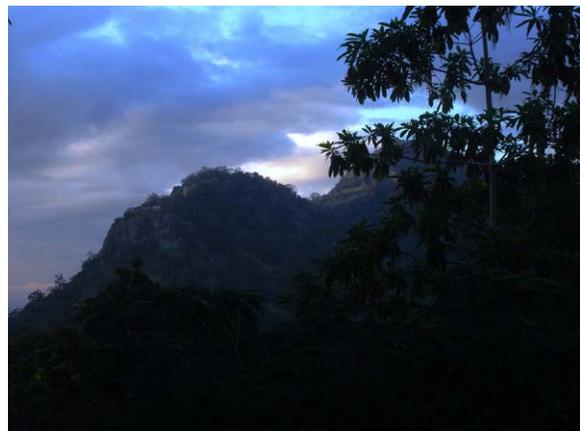
<http://travel.nationalgeographic.com/travel/best-trips-2012/sri-lanka-photos/>

Travel & Leisure

www.travelandleisure.com/articles/hottest-travel-destinations-of-2012/2



Fan tailed flycatcher on its nest at HPH



View to the north from the front verandah at HPH

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