



Emil and Arlene admiring the night-blooming *Epiphyllum* cactus in the front yard

# Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind

- August 2012 -

July, which is usually one of the driest months for us, provided some marginal, but most welcome, precipitation. This didn't stop our unceasing efforts to develop our HPH spring water supply. This effort is proving to require more time than we first envisaged, though sources have been located and assured.

With our very limited supply of manpower at HPH, several initiatives that we thought would be done by now have become "works in progress." However, we are "hurrying slowly" as the Sinhala version of this effort would have it and we are making progress! Some of the diversion of our workers' energies has been in good causes: harvesting a bountiful fruit crop and harvesting one of the best nutmeg crops we've had in recent times. While the prices of this visually attractive crop – you only have to look at a split nutmeg with its outer covering (makes super jelly) split open, bright red mace and nutmeg in the shell to know what I'm talking about – the sheer size of the crop has been most welcome in a year when the prices of EVERYTHING we grow has plummeted!

It's months since the mango season began but there are dribs and drabs of mangoes still on the trees! Our two Ambarella trees are promising a good crop of this savoury fruit and we want to revert also to the original use of this fruit as a dessert, with ice cream to be specific. We also have a half decent crop of Avocadoes on our trees and this is, indeed, a very pleasant change from the last few years.

The Uguessa (*Flacourtia indica*) which many Sri Lankan readers will remember fondly from their childhood has been as

bountiful as have the mangoes. And there is one mangosteen tree that has proved to be a late-bearer producing fruit that should supply us for the next few weeks. All in all, one of the most extended fruit seasons we've experienced!

The Dalada Perahera is upon us and the bad news is that shopping expeditions to Kandy have become urban safaris! But at least, the huge rambutan crop being sold at bargain basement prices on the streets of that Sacred City compensate for the inconvenience!

If we've spent an inordinate amount of time talking about fruit, do forgive us but it's been a great year for so many varieties that grow in our garden and which our visitors so enjoy that we couldn't resist the temptation.

A short while back we had a "first" at HPH: two visitors travelling in a Tuk-Tuk all the way from Kandy! They assured us that it wasn't a totally uncomfortable trip and that they'd do it again! So there! All that remains is for Arlene and/or yours truly to duplicate this feat.



Lunch for a large crowd

**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](mailto:emil@halgollaplantationhome.com)

In the meantime, if you're looking for a quite swift, breezy and relatively cheap mode of transport to HPH from Kandy, maybe you should try it!!

We seem to be gaining the upper hand in World War 2.5 against the palm squirrels who seem to want to take over the ENTIRE ceiling of HPH as an extended nesting ground but we'd still appreciate your prayers for success as the days go by as we battle these cute little guys for possession of our premises!



Upstream from the Soaking Pool

Emil has, at long last, begun the task of putting together a history of the van der Poortens in Sri Lanka. The story begins in the latter part of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century and includes his grandfather's forays into the Congo Free State where he was the Manager of the Plantations of Leopold II and his journeys into the far east where his eldest son, Francis, settled down in what was then Java, never to return to the land of his birth. It promises to provide some entertaining reading for visitors!

Warm wishes, Arlene and Emil

**Did you know that HPH is on Trip Advisor?**

[www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel\\_Review-g304138-d2057765-Reviews-Halgolla\\_Plantation\\_Home-Kandy\\_Kandy\\_District\\_Central\\_Province.html](http://www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g304138-d2057765-Reviews-Halgolla_Plantation_Home-Kandy_Kandy_District_Central_Province.html)



TripAdvisor Mobile and Tablet Apps

**For the months of August and September we are providing each visiting group with a complimentary "Surprise Basket" of HPH "goodies"!**



The end of the giant *Tabebuia rosea* that was struck by lightning: being sawn for lumber in traditional fashion

### Upcoming events in the country

**August-October:** Elephant Gathering in Minneriya National Park. A day trip from HPH.

**Aug 20-Sep 2:** ASP Men's Longboard World Surfing Championships at Arugam Bay.

**August 24-26:** Colombo music festival

**September:** The international Twenty20 cricket tournament is scheduled to be held in Sri Lanka between September 18 and October 7, 2012. This will be the first World Twenty20 tournament held in an Asian country.

**October 7:** Colombo marathon

**October 17-19:** Sri Lankan Airlines Golf Classic, Colombo

\* for those who must...most cricket matches can be watched on TV at HPH

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