



Baikiaea insignis flowers

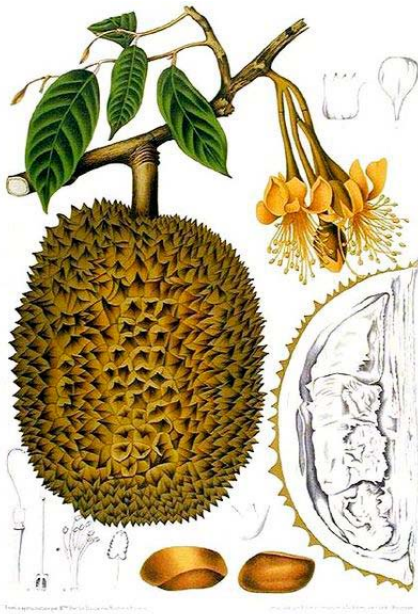
Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind

- May 2013 -

HPH has not been spared the vagaries of climate change that have been experienced the world over. While April is usually the warmest month in the Sri Lankan calendar, the month just past proved capable of setting new highs (lows?) in the matter of high temperatures and humidity. We then had samples of what used to be described in my school geography lessons as “afternoon heat thunderstorms”—sporadic but very dramatic rains with torrential downpours and a great deal of lightning and thunder.

However, we survived all of this weather and while the mango trees have shed a significant part of their “buttons”, a pretty good crop is beginning to mature on a couple of trees. The *jambu* is not only festooned with blossoms but already has fruit ready for preservation in Arlene’s inimitable *dhosi*. For fans of that exotic fruit, several of the Durian trees have loads of flowers as well. Our tropical oranges are also yielding their bounty, some for the



Durian fruit & flowers

first time, as I write this. All in all, a pretty good fruit season, spread over several months, seems to be in store.

However, one of the highlights of the month just past has been the phenomenally copious flowering of the *Baikiaea insignis* tree in our front yard, pictured above. The sheer number of flowers and the length of time over which it continued to blossom was without precedent and when this was accompanied by the truly lovely fragrance of its flowers it was

truly something to experience. Even if it never happens again, we’ll treasure the memory for many years to come.

The topping on the cake of the *Baikiaea* blossoms was the Drunken Sailor creeper in full bloom on the roof outside the windows of Arlene’s and my office space! You didn’t have to be anything resembling an avid horticulturalist to appreciate the sights and fragrances of Halgolla in the April just past. We can’t forget to mention the events of Sri Lanka’s National New Year with all its attached gestures of goodwill of which we were the happy recipients, particularly from those with whom we work throughout the year.

The month ahead promises more activity (and labour!) for us as we consolidate our plans to improve and expand walking paths and places in which our visitors can simply “sit and contemplate” if that’s what one wishes to do. Among the “works in progress” that we are about to commence is a new walking trail extending beyond the Soaking Pool, which, incidentally, is proving a huge attraction with all our visitors.

Apropos of the Soaking Pool, the arch over much of the last bit of the path to it is coming along very nicely as are the “living hand rails” of wild lianas to assist those who need them. Yes, we will continue to live up to the promise of using nature’s bounty rather than chopping down and planting trees and shrubbery in an effort to “improve” on what is already there!



Champaca (sapu) seeds in their pods

May is the month of Vesak – the single most important and best-celebrated Buddhist festival in the calendar – and that religion’s adherents are joined without reservation by all Sri Lankans, inclusive of those who belong to other faiths, making it a national as well as a religious celebration.

We look forward to you joining us soon to enjoy the peace and tranquility of HPH before too long!

Warm wishes, Emil & Arlene

For the month of May we continue to provide each visiting group with a complimentary “Surprise Basket” of HPH “goodies” AND we are offering 50% off food and drinks for children under 12.



Orthetrum chrysis – one of the beautiful dragonflies seen at HPH

Upcoming events in the country

May

The surfing season at Arugam Bay begins! Rated as one of the top ten surfing destinations in the world.

Whale and dolphin watching in Trincomalee begins.

The kitesurfing season in Kalpitiya begins and continues until December.

May 24: Vesak Full Moon Holiday commemorating the birth, enlightenment and death of the Buddha.

June

June 23: Poson Full Moon Holiday, the second-most important Buddhist festival that celebrates the arrival of Buddhism in Sri Lanka in the 3rd century BC.

HPH is highly recommended on Trip Advisor. See what our previous guests have had to say!



TripAdvisor Mobile and Tablet Apps

www.tripadvisor.com/Hotel_Review-g304138-d2057765-Reviews-Halgolla_Plantation_Home-Kandy_District_Central_Province.html

We are also on Facebook

<https://www.facebook.com/HalgollaPlantationHome>

& Airbnb

<https://www.airbnb.com/rooms/906073>

Sri Lanka

“Best in travel 2013”

from The Lonely Planet

<http://www.lonelyplanet.com/sri-lanka>

... and Sri Lanka was 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/>



Sunset from the front veranda of HPH