



Bauhinia kockiana in bloom on our garage roof

Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind

- August 2013 -

July continued to be unseasonably wet and, if it didn't do anything else, proved that we'd had, without realizing it, a several-years-long drought. If nothing else, the continuing greening of vegetation amplified that realization. I made a promise to myself after we almost had to evacuate HPH for lack of drinking water some months ago that I'd never complain about wet weather again. And I've tried to keep that promise!

One of the bonuses of the soaking rain we've experienced has been the progress that our "Bougainvillea Drive" has begun to show. With a little bit of luck, the last 400 metres leading up to HPH is going to have a very attractive hedge of this shrub – a real delight when in bloom – on the upper side of the driveway.

Our nutmeg trees continue to bear and it does seem like we're going to be harvesting for a couple months more, and I suspect that Arlene will have plenty of produce for another batch of her famous nutmeg jelly!

The drought has affected the fullness of the pepper corns on the vines carrying that spice. However, we've got a decent crop and are growing more pepper on the land as well. We are also going to make some **white** pepper this year, something that was the rule rather than the exception in my childhood. For this product, the harvesting is delayed until the individual pepper corns are red-ripe on the vine. The peppercorns are then soaked and pulped manually and the seed dried, to produce a spice that is not as harsh as traditional black pepper and is considered the "gourmet version" of this indispensable addition to every table (and another addition to the "Flavours of HPH!").

One of our resident Red-vented Bulbuls seemed to develop a narcissistic attachment to the left wing-mirror of our little Mitsubishi Minivan, then transferred its attentions to the one on the right and, finally, when dissuaded from its less-than-sane attachment to those reflective surfaces, began to challenge what

he saw in the mirror of the hat-stand in our entry corridor! Strange behavior indeed, which required our intervention to prevent this cheeky bird from doing itself some harm!

In our July newsletter, we referred to the Dalada Perahera that takes place in Kandy in August and I don't suppose it would hurt to provide readers of this newsletter with another reminder of this magnificent torch-lit procession that traverses the streets of the hill capital, Kandy, for ten consecutive nights and concludes in daylight with an elaborate ritual which includes collecting water from Sri Lanka's longest river in a "water-cutting" ceremony. The hundreds of dancers, drummers and dozens of elephants in this torch-lit procession is something not to be missed and HPH is a good launching pad for a visit to this truly unique festival.



The Kandy Perahera in 1885

Warm wishes!
Arlene & Emil

For the month of August we continue to provide each visiting group with a complimentary “Surprise Basket” of HPH “goodies”

AND we are offering 50% off meals for ALL visitors under the age of 12 for this month as well.

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>



Driveway into HPH with huge boulder on right

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/>



Ampelocissus indica fruits – a medicinal plant and member of the Grape family (Vitaceae)

Upcoming events in Sri Lanka

Through to Sept:

- **surfing** at Arugam Bay, one of the top ten spots in the world
- **kitesurfing** at Kalpitiya
- **whale and dolphin watching** at Trincomalee

August

Aug. 11-20: Kandy Perahera. This world famous event is spectacular. A series of processions in which the golden casket holding a tooth relic of the Buddha take place throughout this period. Elephants, drummers, lights and monks are part of the procession. A smaller procession, the Kumbal Perahera, runs from Aug. 11–15. The main procession, the Randoli Perahera, runs from Aug. 16–20.