



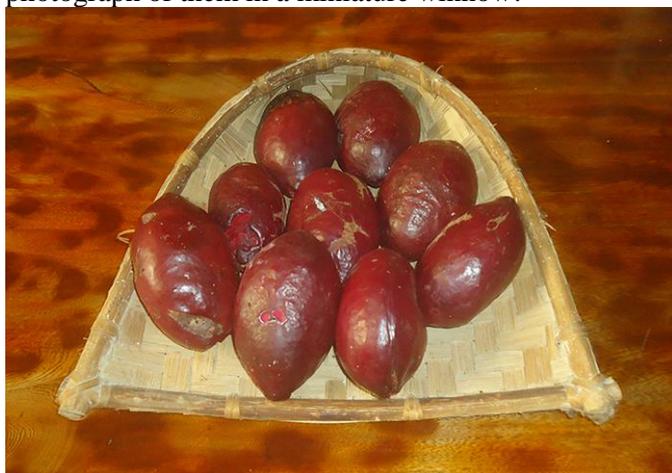
# Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind

– December 2015 –

As the year draws to a close, preparations for our staff Christmas Party which is basically a children's event are gathering steam or, rather, Arlene's putting "the pedal to the metal" as that old Ceylonism has it! Many of those who first attended as children have not allowed their subsequent maturity to prevent them from joining in the festivities and it certainly seems to include everyone from the proverbial "eight (months) to 80 (years)!"

We had a picture of an Okari nut "fruit" in last month's newsletter and, lo and behold, after a very long hiatus, we've had a larger number of fallen fruit than we've ever experienced in the past. As a result, we couldn't resist the temptation of boasting of our surfeit of riches with another photograph of them in a miniature winnow!



**Okari nuts in a miniature winnow**

On a sad note, what we have in the way of a mango crop is being decimated – and we don't use the term lightly – by the macaques and, particularly, the giant squirrels. Not even firecrackers seem to deter them and we are at our wit's end in the matter of dealing with these pests, not having the option of "terminating them with extreme prejudice" as that old CIA phrase had it! If any of our readers have any

(practical) suggestions as to how to deal with the problem, we'd certainly welcome them.

The seemingly never-ending process of maintaining HPH, making little improvements to it as well, continues apace and the newest task completed has been modification and improvements to the canopy over the steps leading from the garage to our front verandah and, as part of the boasting rights from that work, the proud carpenters (Senevi & Gamini) appear below their achievement in this month's newsletter!



**Gamini & Senevi under the new canopy**

Future visitors to HPH can expect an improvement in the (already well received) quality of our home-grown coffee when we revert to a time-honoured mode of preparation involving the use of a traditional mortar and pestle in the process.

The weather in the month past has been much like it was in December of last year – light, ground-soaking rain – and we really do welcome the moisture after many years of drought that even placed our drinking water supply in jeopardy. In celebration of what the weather means to us, we are taking the liberty of reproducing a recent picture of the view down the valley which lies at the feet of HPH. Our website has a more dramatic picture of the same view except that it was taken during a drought and the multi-hued sky reflects that fact.

While cousin “Butterfly George’s” (Dr. Michael van der Poorten’s) landmark book on the butterflies of Sri Lanka is on the cusp of publication<sup>1</sup>, he is *hors d’combat* having broken a leg in an attempt to stop one of their pets from attacking a stray dog. Anyone who is familiar with George’s energy level can well imagine what a handful he must be now that his only means of locomotion for the next six weeks is a pair of crutches! Several of our guests have enjoyed George and Nancy’s company while at HPH and I am sure will wish him a speedy recovery.

Let us close wishing you a very merry Christmas, a bright and prosperous new year and happy holidays.

Talk to you again in 2016!  
Arlene & Emil

(it is by far the largest tree at HPH) wasn’t possible. This tree, again, came from the nursery of the Royal Botanical Gardens in Peradeniya and was planted by the author’s father, Benjamin. While there have to be other specimens elsewhere in Sri Lanka, it is the only one of its kind that we are aware of in our neck of the woods and does belong to the same family as the more modest *Kottamba* that most Sri Lankans are familiar with and shares the former’s habit of shedding all of its leaves before the new foliage emerges. The okari is considered the “King of nuts” in the far east and would probably achieve the same status in Sri Lanka if more people on our island were familiar with it and the delicious kernel.



Okari tree with its new foliage

HPH is highly recommended on Trip Advisor.  
See what our previous [guests](#) have had to say!



TripAdvisor Mobile and Tablet Apps

You can now book directly with us from our website at: [www.halgollaplantationhome.com](http://www.halgollaplantationhome.com). Look for the booking widget:

Check In date:	Nights:	
<input type="text" value="01 Jul 2015"/>	<input type="text" value="1"/>	<input type="button" value="Search"/>

Use the widget above\* to check for availability at HPH and to make your booking directly with us. Please note that there is a minimum stay of 2 nights for each booking.

If you don’t see it, refresh your browser and make sure that your browser is set to “allow blocked content”. Please note that there is a minimum stay of 2 nights for each booking.

We are also on [Facebook](#). Bookings can be made on [Trip Advisor](#), [Airbnb](#), [Booking.com](#) and [Agoda](#) as well as by contacting us directly.

Sri Lanka: rated as a top tourist destination by [The Lonely Planet](#); [Condé Nast Traveller](#); [The New York Times](#); and [National Geographic](#). And most recently the (London) Times has rated Sri Lanka the No. 1 tourist destination in the world.

For December we’ll continue our very popular  
“Sampler pack”  
of HPH-grown and -roasted coffee  
and  
the “Surprise Basket” of HPH “goodies,” both now  
famous trademarks of HPH hospitality

### Halgolla Plantation Home

- now ranked #8/241 B&Bs in Kandy on Trip Advisor
- Certificate of Excellence 2015 from Trip Advisor
- rated as [Best Home Stay](#) in Sri Lanka 2013
- recommended by [Bradt Travel Guide for Sri Lanka](#) 5th edition, 2014

### Plants of interest at HPH – *Terminalia okari* (E. Okari nut, Sinhala – Kottamba)

Since we’ve made mention of the Okari nut (*Terminalia okari*) elsewhere in this newsletter, we thought it only appropriate that we include a picture of the new foliage on it. Unfortunately, due to the other vegetation around it a picture that does justice to its massive, majestic proportions

<sup>1</sup> We will provide further information to readers of this Newsletter once it has been published