



HPH entry with pics of Grandmother and Grandfather van der Poorten & the family crest front and centre!

Halgolla Plantation Home

Accommodation of a different kind
- April 2016 -

Both Arlene and I are, presumably, on the mend after some “health issues” which saw her undergoing major cardio-thoracic surgery on March 1st in Colombo from where she is yet to return to HPH. Yours truly, not to be outdone, has been monitored by a couple of Cardiac Electrophysiologists (Bet **your** consultant doesn’t have anything resembling such a grandiose title!) to determine what is the optimum dosage of Warfarin (that’s right the same stuff traditionally used to poison rats) to ensure staying among the living if not enjoying the longevity that he had set himself with a target of 138 years!) And, as if to welcome the distaff side of this household from her extended stay, in and out of health institutions, our “golden blossom tree,” the *Cassia serratifolia*, is wreathed in flowers for a second time, **the first time that’s ever happened!**

Some of the durian, mango and mangosteen trees are loaded with flowers and we can but hope that that early promise is transformed into bountiful crops. As I write this, the giant squirrels are dropping “mango bombs” on the kitchen roof since we have nothing with which to dissuade them from doing so!

We have been “gussying up” the Springhill Path, particularly the environs of the large rock, under which resides Gamini’s Bench (see pic in the March Newsletter). While Meditation Flat has you looking down the Weuda Valley into the North Western Province, the view from Gamini’s Bench is in a, generally, south-westerly direction towards the Sabaragamuwa province. We have trimmed some of the intruding foliage around the Bench to provide an unobstructed view of Alagalla on the farther side of which

many of our visitors have done the train journey from Colombo to Kandy.



Durian flowers

You, dear reader, are going to have to put up with my efforts at putting out this newsletter without the assistance of Nancy van der Poorten who performed the task of publisher, editor and goodness knows what else in ensuring the professional quality of our monthly report from day one! Higher quality than she brought to this effort doesn’t exist! Her efforts, despite being involved with putting out a far more ambitious publication – the definitive volume on the Butterflies of Sri Lanka which she has co-authored with her husband Dr. Michael (George) van der Poorten - are going to be sorely missed.

One of the mammals common to HPH is the Pangolin. It has very seldom, if ever, been seen by visitors to our Homestay because of its nocturnal habits, though its “calling card” – termite hills ripped apart by its massive claws - is often in evidence, particularly after rainy weather. The animal’s English name is derived from the Malaysian, meaning “one that can make itself into a ball,” reflecting its



Pangolin (Manis crassicaudata)

ability to do exactly that when threatened. Its primary diet is of insects which it gathers after ripping apart anything that looks like an ant abode with the afore-mentioned claws. It then proceeds to take out the ants and their grubs with its long sticky tongue which can be up to a foot long!. Thanks to the predilection of many in East Asia for “mumbo-jumbo” medicine, this remarkable animal is on the IUCN’s endangered list and readers of this newsletter are encouraged to join one of the organizations dedicated to saving this (and other endangered species) from extinction.

On a totally different note: something that we try to remind readers of this newsletter who’ve visited HPH is our need for them to review us on the Trip Advisor web page. Being the kind of operation we are - one that tries to provide a unique Sri Lankan plantation experience coupled with local cuisine of the highest standard, intelligent conversation and the warmth of sharing a home with one’s hosts - we depend on those who’ve already spent time with us to get the word out about HPH. So, if you haven’t already done so, please review us on TripAdvisor. You can do this simply by going to www.tripadvisor.com/reviewit.

With all good wishes!

Arlene & Emil

■ rated as [Best Home Stay](#) in Sri Lanka 2013

■ recommended by [Bradt Travel Guide for Sri Lanka](#)
5th edition, 2014

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



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You can now book directly with us from our website at: www.halgollaplantationhome.com. Look for the booking widget:

Check In date:	Nights:	Search
01 Jul 2015	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** and we do **not** accept credit cards. Payments accepted in US\$, Sri Lankan rupees or any major currency. We are also on [Facebook](#). Bookings can be made on [Trip Advisor](#), [Airbnb](#), [Booking.com](#) and [Agoda](#) or, **preferably**, by contacting us directly.

Sri Lanka: rated as a top tourist destination by [The Lonely Planet](#); [Condé Nast Traveller](#); [The New York Times](#); [National Geographic](#); and [the \(London\) Times](#). And most recently by [Huffington Post UK](#). In addition, [Fox News](#) follows the lead of The Lonely Planet by recommending Sri Lanka as the #1 place to visit!



The view out of our bedroom window, one of which we’ll never tire, this time with the moon setting behind the Poinciana trees!

**For April 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

For information or to book your accommodation, check our website www.halgollaplantationhome.com or contact Emil van der Poorten: emil@halgollaplantationhome.com or by phone: 94-77-347-0702 or 94-72-284-9770