



NOT surreal wrestlers! Just tangled Entada (*Pus-vel*) lianas.

HALGOLLA PLANTATION HOME
 - **THE** UNIQUE SRI LANKAN EXPERIENCE -
 APRIL 2018

One of my childhood memories was of the phrase, "Predicting the weather is a mug's game." This is one of those facts of life that has become an eternal verity! Nuff said while we

are in the throes of yet another terrible drought! One of the pieces of good news, though is the crop of vanilla flowers which is infinitely bigger



The *Pus-vel paara* portion of one of HPH's walking trails

than last year, keeping Biso and Rajamani busier than proverbial bees every morning! We seem to spend an inordinate amount of time dealing with "health issues" but one tends to get philosophical about such with the advancing years. Our enjoyment of HPH as a place in which to live is undiminished and those who've spent time with us will appreciate why. For those who are in denial about climate change, I give you a simple example of what is happening, literally, under our noses. Our Yellow Tabebuia which wore its gorgeous blossom for one day in the year and then provided us with a golden blanket at its foot

the next day, has blossomed **three** times in the past month with the flowers staying on for several days each time! It's great for the swarms of Giant Rock Bees, the Purple and

For April, as in months' past, we'll continue our "Surprise Basket" of HPH "goodies" for visitors as they take their leave of HPH and which appears to delight them.

- Certificate of Excellence 2015 from Trip Advisor
- rated as [Best Home Stay](#) in Sri Lanka
- recommended by [Bradt Travel Guide for Sri Lanka](#)

Purple-rumped Sunbirds and the Lorikeets, but we worry whether the



The **THIRD** blossoming of our Yellow Tabebuia!

tree is preparing to depart this world, providing progeny

before it does, as so often is the case in the plant kingdom. We hope that we'll have the best of both worlds – wondrous blossoms for more than one day in the year **and** the tree that bears them living many more years!



Champac, the favourite food of the Grackle (Hill Mynah)



The Giant Rock Bees (*Bambaras*) are back!

We hope that the return of the Giant Rock Bees, ultra-aggressive though they are, is a harbinger of better things to come in the environment around HPH. While one has to be extremely careful not to disturb them (nor be around when someone else might have done so!), they are a wonderful part of Sri Lanka.

Our nutmeg crop is tailing off but harvest is going to continue, sporadically, over the next couple of months.

We are also in the process of clearing limbs from trees adjacent to our Durian trees in order to make their blossoms and fruit less accessible to.....guess who? Macaque monkeys, giant squirrels and their little (Palm) cousins. Wish us luck!

Something long overdue: we are going to get some fish fingerlings (*Tilapia mossambica*) from cousin Lawrence, at the bottom of our hill, and

our water storage – *Aeth Amuna* and the new *Ulpoth Amuna* will then be stocked with the best-known of edible tropical freshwater fish. This again is a return to “the old days” when, prior to my departure for Canada in 1973 we stocked several small reservoirs on Halgolla with this fish and a species of carp.

The disaster area that passed for office space for yours truly has been partially re-organized and while it still isn’t the epitome of order and neatness, it is, admitted even by Arlene, a quantum improvement on what preceded it!

If/when Selvarajah and his son, Daniel who recently entered formal employment at the heavy-equipment training school in our neighbourhood, find the time, they will embark on restoring our spice dryer, ensuring that the construction shortcomings in the first edition are not repeated this time around! Incidentally, most of the raw material going into its reconstruction – lumber, clay for plastering etc. - will, as usual, come off our land.

All for now, folks!

With all good wishes,

Arlene & Emil

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A familiar sight as you enter HPH