

CAIRNS  
ART  
GALLERY

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28 AUG 2021 –  
14 FEB 2022

**WILLIAM T COOPER**

*BOTANICAL ART OF THE  
TROPICAL RAINFOREST*

ARTWORK LABELS

**William T COOPER**

***Archidendron ramiflorum***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

***Hope's Cycad or Zamia Palm (Lepidozamia hopei)***

1993

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/3/145

This stately cycad from the Wet Tropics rainforest is tall and palm-like but it belongs to an ancient lineage that existed long before palms evolved. The cone depicted was nestled in the crown of the plant. It was so ripe that if we had cut it at the cone base it would have fallen and scattered into many pieces. Although this was in the Daintree rainforest, we were on private property. We noticed a pile of builder's essentials nearby, including some scaffolding, which we erected to about 4 metres. Bill then climbed o the top of this structure, where he sat to draw the fruit in situ, before we cut the sample for preserving as a herbarium specimen.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

***Pandanus (Pandanus cookii)***

2005

pencil and watercolour

Private collection, Atherton

Pandanus is an interesting group of plants in somewhat of a taxonomic mess, partly because the species are variable and they hybridise. In 2005, Bill and I decided to begin work on this group, which involved Bill painting a full-page illustration for each species. Pandanus species have many overlapping features and are not a simple group to work on. Today, other botanists are getting close to untangling Pandanus species concepts.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Coconut Palm (Cocos nucifera)***

2005

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 49/Folder 2/3

## ***Archidendron ramiflorum***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

## ***Crimson Berries (Antirhea tenuiflora)***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

Crimson Berry is a sub-canopy tree in north Queensland's lush rainforests, occurring from Cape York to the Conway Range near Mackay. The ribbed red fruits are a favourite of many birds.

Bill noted in his diary on 8 March 1992:

*Saw King Parrots eating Antirhea tenuiflora. Actually, they were extracting the seeds and dropping the flesh.*

It is a common tree on our rainforested property, where we walked most days. Bill especially liked to walk in the morning because of the warm light that dappled leaves, leaf-litter, trunks, everything. The afternoon light, especially in winter with its long shadows, he found grey and miserable, preferring to retreat to the studio at that time of day.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Atherton Sauropus (Sauropus macranthus)***

1998

watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

## ***White Supplejack (Ripogonum album)***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

## ***Bumpy Satinash (Syzygium cormiflorum)***

1980

pencil, ink and watercolour

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

PIC/20835/30

Bumpy Satinash is a tall tree growing in Queensland's tropical rainforest. The presence of flowers and fruit studded on the trunk (cauliflory) gives the plant an exotic jungle look. Cauliflory is restricted to tropical forests.

Bill wrote about a visit to our property from a film crew in June 2002 in his diary:

*ABC/BBC film crew working at Syzygium cormiflorum on the edge of the road (100m from house). They were filming hand reared animals within an enclosure on the tree – generator running – bright lights and 4 or 5 people. On more than one occasion a Striped Possum came and fed (2 animals) and 2 Herbert River Ringtails on separate nights. During the day there were riflebirds taking nectar and Lewins and McLeays Honeyeaters. A very productive tree!*

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Milky Silkpod (Parsonsia latifolia)***

1983

pen and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program  
by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 39/5

## ***Birds Nest Ferns (Asplenium sp.)***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

Asplenium is from a (without) and spleen, referring to the plant's traditional use as a cure for spleen disorders.

Bird's Nest Fern species are many and widespread in distribution. Their compact epiphytic growth habit and large glossy leaves made them excellent candidates for use in the foreground or background of Bill's bird paintings. There are many examples of them in Bill's archives from the forests of north and southern Australia to New Guinea, and on our own property at Topaz.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Staghorn (Platycterium sp.)***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

## ***Common Silkpod (Parsonsia straminea)***

1985

pen and pencil

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program  
by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 20/5

## ***Bird's Nest Fern (Asplenium sp.)***

1993

pen, pencil and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program  
by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 51/63

## ***Dischidia sp. and Myrmecodia sp.***

1981

pen, pencil and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program  
by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 2/41

## ***Fruit drawing***

1995

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 3/88

## ***Fruit drawing***

1994

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/70

## ***Fruit drawing***

1993

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/66

## ***Fruit drawing***

1993

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/64

## ***Fruit drawing***

1993

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/58

## ***Fruit drawing***

1993

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/56

## ***Fruit drawing***

1991-1993

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/36

## ***Bengal Clock Vine*** ***(Thunbergia grandiflora)***

c.2005

watercolour

Private collection, New South Wales

Bengal Clock Vine is a rampant canopy climber from India. It has been widely cultivated for its spectacular blue or purple flowers and it has now become a serious weed in parts of Queensland, especially in the lowlands around Cairns. The plant grows from the smallest of bits and cuttings as well as from a large persistent underground tuber. This piece is one of the few complete botanical paintings executed by Bill.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Tecomanthe burungu***

2000

watercolour

Australian National Herbarium, Centre for Australian National Biodiversity Research,  
National Research Collections Australia, CSIRO. Canberra

## ***Star Flower (Gardenia scabrella)***

undated

watercolour

Private Collection, Cairns

## ***Golden Guinea Tree (Dillenia alata)***

2007

watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

Red Beech or Golden Guinea Tree is a distinctive tree with red papery bark, mostly found growing in coastal swamp forests from Cardwell to the Torres Strait in Queensland, the Northern Territory and New Guinea.

A few bright yellow flowers are present at most times of the year. The fruits are red flower-shaped capsules with black seeds enclosed in fleshy white arils. Most rainforest trees have small insignificant white flowers but this species has such large showy flowers that Bill made them the subject of complete botanical paintings on a couple of occasions.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Mistletoe (Amyema whitei)***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Hobart

## ***Burny Bean (Mucuna gigantea)***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Hobart



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c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Hobart

## ***Burny Bean (Mucuna gigantea)***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Hobart

## ***Kaik or Kup (Zygogynum staufferianum)***

1973

pencil, ink and watercolour

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

PIC/20835/31

Kaik is a small tree of the Western Highlands of Papua New Guinea above 2,400 metres. The forest is cold, wet, tall and mossy. Bill was there for an extended trip to study and draw birds of paradise. Beside his campfire at Tomba on the slopes of Mt Hagen, Bill watched a male and 2 uncoloured Loria's Birds of Paradise feeding on these fruits.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Flaming Torch (Billbergia pyramidalis)***

undated (c.1980)

pen, pencil and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 49/Folder 1/5

The Flaming Torch bromeliad is a native epiphyte of South America widely cultivated in Australia. Bill was able to take advantage of a cultivated Flaming Torch for use in a large acrylic painting on canvas (approximately 2 x 1 metres) of Blue and Yellow Macaws. We were particular about finding plants near home that also occurred with overseas birds. However, it was often more difficult to confirm the habitats of South American subjects, and occasionally Bill was forced to use broadly correct plants with birds.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Red Silky Oak (Alloxylon flammeum)***

1993

watercolour

Private collection, Atherton

## ***Red Silky Oak (Alloxylon flammeum)***

c.1992

watercolour

Private collection, Hobart

Red Silky Oak is a canopy tree of the Wet Tropics in medium-to high-altitude rainforest in north Queensland. The majority of Australian rainforest trees have insignificant white flowers, unlike Pink Silky Oak, whose large Waratah-like flowers bloom between June and December. Slender red petals cover the ground beneath trees that have been visited by honeyeaters or Rainbow Lorikeets foraging for nectar.

Bill did not consider himself a botanical artist but many regarded his paintings to the contrary.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***China Pine (Goniothalamus australis)***

c.1991

watercolour

Private collection, Hobart

## ***Crimson Passionflower (Passiflora vitifolia)***

1978

pen and goauche

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

With such large colourful flowers, Crimson Passionflower or Perfumed Passionflower is widely cultivated and has become naturalised in many countries including Malaysia. It is a native vine of Central and South America and because Bill was often commissioned to paint birds from places he hadn't visited he was quick to capture this spectacular plant while he had the opportunity. This specimen was hanging over the roadside at Bukit Fraser in Malaysia.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

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Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Fruit drawing***

1990

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/24

## ***Fruit drawing***

1990

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/23

## ***Fruit drawing***

1990-1994

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/14

## ***Fruit drawing***

2001-2002

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 3/133

## ***Fruit drawing***

2001

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 3/129

## ***Fruit drawing***

1998-2000

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 3/101

## ***Fruit drawing***

1995

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 3/92

## ***Fruit drawing***

1990-1994

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1309/Box 2/17

## ***Pied Monarch (Arses kaupi)***

1993

synthetic polymer paint on board

Private collection, Hobart

## ***Spectacled Monarch (Symposiachrus trivirgatus)***

1993

synthetic polymer paint on canvas on board

Private collection, Atherton

## ***Olive-backed Oriole***

1978

watercolour on illustration board

Private Collection, New South Wales

## ***Great Indian Hornbills*** ***(Buceros bicornis)***

1993

oil on board

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

## ***Palm Cockatoos (Probosciger aterrimus)***

undated (c.1986)

synthetic polymer paint on canvas on board

Private collection, Victoria

## ***Red Gourd (Trichosanthes pentaphylla)***

1981

pen, pencil and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 20/3

Red Gourd is a widespread tendril climber mostly of lowland rainforest in tropical Queensland. This sketch was done in 1981 when we had no idea what species the plant was. At that time, the species was not known to occur at Iron Range. We knew that both the unidentified plant and Palm Cockatoos occurred in the same forest, so Bill created this painting soon after our observations. Thirty years later, I did taxonomic work on this group, so we returned to the area to collect specimens in order to officially confirm that the plant does indeed occur in those forests.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Lolly Berry (Salacia chinensis)***

1989

pen and watercolour

Private collection, Atherton

# **Sea Hearse (*Hernandia nymphaeifolia*)**

1998

pen, pencil and watercolour

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

PIC/20835/20

Sea Hearse is a lush tree occurring on tropical beaches and in mangrove areas from north Queensland through South-east Asia to East Africa. The fruit is the black nut surrounded by lampshade-like green or reddish bracts.

Bill needed a plant for a painting of Goffin's Corella, a species from the Tanimbar Islands of Indonesia. We knew that Sea Hearse occurred with the bird in the wild so we were able to use a familiar tree growing at Emmagen Beach near Cape Tribulation.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

# **Plane Butterfly on *Salacia disepala***

undated (c.1991)

pen and watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

*Salacia disepala* is a tendril-climbing vine that occurs in rainforests north from Tully in Queensland. The fruit of this vine was unknown to botanists until Bill and I found it. That fruit contained caterpillars, which we took home and bred through to adults, using the *Salacia* fruit. The caterpillars in fact eat the seeds in the fruit and the butterflies turned out to be the beautiful Australian Plane, or Sword-tailed Flash. Bill wrote about the experience in his diary:

*21st Feb, 1992. Reared an Australian Plane butterfly. The caterpillar was found in the seed of Salacia disepala. It pupated 9/2/92 and emerged (female) on 21/2/92. Kept it as a specimen. The pupa case had no girdle. Pupated in curled dead leaf. The caterpillar had a wide pale band across middle.*

Wendy Cooper, 2019

# ***Banana Fig (Ficus pleurocarpa) with Spectacled Flying-foxes (Pteropus conspicillatus)***

1994

watercolour

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

PIC/20835/19

Banana Figs are stranglers that begin life when the seeds germinate on the branch of a suitable tree. They send roots down to the ground, eventually enclosing the host's trunk and crowding out its crown. This species is limited to the Wet Tropics. The figs are large – up to 65 millimetres long – and keenly sought by Spectacled Flying-foxes, Green Possums and several fruit-eating bird species. Because this tree was on the edge of our garden we frequently watched the fruit being taken.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

# ***Sandpaper Fig (Ficus fraseri)***

1981

pen, pencil and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 46/30

Sandpaper Fig is found along the Australian east coast north from Sydney to the Torres Strait Islands. It is also in the Northern Territory and the Pacific Islands. It is sometimes deciduous and can grow to the height of the forest canopy. Its variously coloured fruits and bunched leaves make it a perfect plant for a bird painting. The sectioned 'fruit' in the painting shows the fleshy receptacle, or fig, which envelops the tiny flowers and seeds (technically the fruit).

Wendy Cooper, 2019

# ***White-headed Fruit-Pigeon (Columbia leucomela)***

undated

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1408/Box 1/2



***Pied Imperial Pigeon (Ducula bicolor)***

2009

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1408/Box 2/28

**BOTTOM**

***Brown Cuckoo-Dove (Macropygia amboinensis)***

2005

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1408/Box1/6

***Rose-crowned Fruit-Dove (Ptilinopus regina)***

undated

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1408/Box 2/22

***White or Grey Mangrove (Avicennia marina)***

1970

pen, pencil and gouache

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/ Box 46/13

***Orange-bellied Fruit Dove (Ptilinopus iozonus)***

undated

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1408/Box 2/25

## ***Wompoo Fruit-Dove (Ptilinopus magnificus)***

2008

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1408/Box 2/24

## ***Long-leaved Grape (Cissus sterculiifolia)***

2005

pen, pencil and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 20/22

Long-leaved Grape is a tendril climber from the rainforests of eastern Australia and New Guinea.

Since Long-leaved Grape fruits are eaten by many birds, Bill made a reference drawing of this specimen growing near home at Topaz, knowing he would use it one day.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Woolly Caper Bush (Capparis tomentosa)***

1995

pen, pencil and watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

Woolly Caper Bush is a thorny scrambler occurring in riverine forests with a widespread distribution from South Africa and Namibia, north to Senegal and Eritrea. On a balmy morning after a stormy night in western Kenya, the riverine forest was alive with birds and mammals as a result of the previous night's rain. Jackson's Hornbills were opening Capparis fruit and swallowing most of the seeds and pulp. White-bellied Go-away Birds then moved in to delicately extract the small bits of pulp remaining in cracked fruit hanging on the vine.

Bill wrote about the sighting in his diary:

*Thurs. 5th Oct. 1995. Up at 0630 and off to West Pokot with our breakfast in a box... Went over to the Suam River which comes off Mt Elgon... Collected a species of Capparis which I drew on the spot. The White-bellied Go-aways eat the fruit—pecking a hole in the side of it exposing a lovely pink watermelon colour inside.*

*Later watched Jackson's Hornbill squash a fruit with its bill and then extract the contents. I sat under a tree to draw the Capparis while the others went 'birding'.*

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***White-bellied Go-away Bird (Corythaixoides leucogaster)***

1996

watercolour

Private collection, Canberra

## ***Crowned Hornbills (Tockus alboterminatus)***

1990

watercolour

Private collection, Hobart

## ***Winged Bersama (Bersama abyssinica)***

1989

pen, pencil and watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

Winged Bersama is a tree that grows up to 24 metres and is widespread in sub-Saharan Africa. All parts of the plant are poisonous, and one used medicinally. In 1989, on an East African trip to gather information about hornbills, we became lost between Lake Baringo and Kitale in Kenya. However, we were unexpectedly rewarded by coming across a group of Crowned Hornbills in a Winged Bersama sapling beside the road. They were devouring the large *Nudaurelia* caterpillars feeding on the leaves of the tree. A young or female bird was begging and being fed by a male. Bill noted this exciting behaviour in his diary and it provided new material for a very different hornbill plate for Bill's 1990 book *Kingfishers and Related Birds*.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Regent Bowerbird (Sericulus chrysocephalus)***

2013

synthetic polymer paint on panel

Private Collection, New South Wales

Maiden's Blush trees are forest giants with wonderful high arching plank buttresses; this subspecies is restricted to the Wet Tropics. The large leaves for the painting of Regent Bowerbirds were easy enough to collect from low branches but Bill resorted to a .22 rifle to shoot down a small stem with fruit, that was visible high up in the forest canopy.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Burdekin Plum (Pleiogynium timorense)***

1998

pen and watercolour

Tableland Regional Gallery, Atherton

## ***Five-leaved Grape (Cissus hypoglauca)***

2003

pen, pencil and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program  
by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 2/2

## ***Superb Fruit Dove (Ptilinopus superbus)***

undated

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1408/Box 2/21

## ***Strawberry Tree (Muntingia calabura)***

2011

pen and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program  
by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 2/74

Strawberry Tree or Panama Berry is a popular small ornamental tree from South America (Bolivia to Mexico). The fruits are edible for humans as well as being taken by birds, enabling it to become naturalised in many countries including Australia. This specimen taken from the forest edge in Cairns was used for a painting of the Christmas Island Imperial Pigeon. The plant is naturalised on Christmas Island.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Jitta (Halfordia scleroxyla)***

2003

pen and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 46/52

Jitta or Ghittoe is a tree of wet tropical rainforest, locally famous as an oily wood that will burn when wet. For that reason, the plant is also known as Kerosene-wood. This particular tree fruits in abundance near our house almost every year. The somewhat nomadic Topknot Pigeons seem to particularly favour it, visiting in big flocks.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## ***Topknot Pigeon (Lopholaimus antarcticus)***

2005

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1408/Box 2/29

## ***Christmas Island Imperial Pigeon (Ducula whartoni)***

2015

watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Purchased from Andrew Isles, 2015

PXD 1408/Box 2/26

## ***Victoria's Riflebirds (Ptiloris victoriae)***

2013

synthetic polymer paint on board

Private collection, Brisbane

## ***Victoria's Riflebird (Ptiloris victoriae)*** sketch

c.1986

pen, pencil and watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

# ***Giant Pepper Vine (Piper hederaceum)***

2009

pencil, ink and watercolour

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

PIC/20835/40

Giant Pepper Vine climbs to the forest canopy, adhering to host tree trunks by adventitious roots. It has a broad distribution from north Queensland to southern New South Wales. The fruit of this vine is eaten by birds and, because Bill found the leaf shape and knuckles at the junctions on the stems attractive, he used it a few times in major bird paintings, including of White-headed Pigeons and Victoria's Riflebirds, who are always keen to seek out the peppery-scented fruit.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

# ***Fig (Ficus sp.)***

1970

pencil, ink and watercolour

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

PIC/20835/18

# ***Salvadori's Fig Parrot***

***(Psittaculirostris salvadorii);***

# ***Edward's Fig Parrot***

***(Psittaculirostris edwardsii); Desmarest's Fig***

# ***Parrot***

***(Psittaculirostris desmarestii)***

1971

gouache

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

#R6717

***Ruppell's Parrot (Poicephalus rueppellii)***  
***Red-bellied Parrot (Poicephalus rufiventris)***

1971

gouache

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

PIC R6762

***Sweet Thorn (Vachellia karroo)***

1970

pen and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 46/31

***White Cedar or Persian Lilac (Melia azedarach)***

undated

pen, pencil and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 46/37

***Cuban Macaw (Ara tricolor);***  
***Red-fronted Macaw (Ara rubrogenys)***

1972

gouache

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

#R6780

# ***Bamboo (Nastus sp.)***

undated

pen and watercolour

Mitchell Library, State Library of New South Wales

Donated through the Australian Government's Cultural Gifts Program

by William and Wendy Cooper (for Manooka Pty Ltd), 2016

PXD 1440/Box 46/22

William Cooper's diary Mon. 7th May 1973.

*Left Avios hut this morning and walked 2½ hours to Murray Pass. Took 7 boys. Avi, Kova, and Patrick went back to Avios and will come up tomorrow afternoon to carry gear back. The walk up was really fantastic. The climbing bamboo draped all through the heavily moss laden trees and then all of a sudden to come out onto grassland dotted with strange tree ferns. The steepness of these hills is extreme, sometimes almost vertical and in other places the track was actually overhanging the drop of hundreds of feet into fast running creeks. Far below us Ero Creek was roaring on its twisted path to the Vanapa River.*

# ***Josephine's Lorikeet (Charmosyna josefinae); Duchess Lorikeet (Charmosyna margarethae); Fairy Lorikeet (Charmosyna pulchella)***

1970

gouache

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

#R6697

# ***Brehm's Parrot (Psittacella brehmii)***

1971

gouache

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

#R6719

# ***Papuan Lory (Charmosyna papou); Stella's Lory (Charmosyna papou)***

1970

gouache

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

#R6698



***Musschenbroek's Lorikeet (Neopsittacus musschenbroekii); Emerald Lorikeet (Neopsittacus pullicauda); Whiskered Lorikeet (Oreopsittacus arfaki)***

1970

gouache

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

#R6699

***Umbrella Tree (Schefflera sp.)***

c.1970

pencil, ink and watercolour

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

PIC/20835/25

***Blue-rumped Parrot (Psittinus cyanurus); (Bolbopsittacus lunulatus)***

1970

gouache

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

#R6718

***King Parrots (Alisterus scapularis)***

1981

watercolour

Private collection, Canberra

***Native Cashew (Semecarpus australiensis)***

1999

pen and watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

## ***Tetra Beech (Steganthera laxiflora)***

1988

pen and watercolour

Private collection, Atherton Tablelands

Tetra Beech is a sub-canopy tree growing to about 20 metres in tropical Queensland. The flowers form on the inside wall of a ball-like receptacle. That receptacle has a tiny opening at the apex allowing insects to enter and pollinate the flowers. As the fertilised flowers and immature fruit expand and ripen, the receptacle turns inside out with the fruit protruding outwards resembling a cow's udder. Many species of birds feed on these fruits at our rainforested property. As it is not a canopy tree, it was an easy specimen to collect with a long-handled picker pole and was an ideal plant for a painting with Superb Fruit-Doves. As annotated by Bill, this plant was previously known as *Tetrasynandra laxiflora*

Wendy Cooper 2019

## ***Black Bean***

### ***(Castanospermum australe)***

1980

pencil, ink and watercolour

Pictures Collection, National Library of Australia

PIC/20835/5

## ***Victoria's Riflebirds at Topaz (on Topaz Tamarind Synima macrophylla)***

1993

synthetic polymer paint on canvas on board

Private collection, Hobart

Topaz Tamarind is a slender, often single-stemmed tree that grows to eleven metres but is usually much shorter than that. Its distribution is confined to the Wet Tropics bioregion and most common at Topaz. The hot pink fruit have a fleshy yellow aril at the base of each seed. Victoria's Riflebird is dexterous with its slender long bill, which it uses to remove the fruit's shiny black seed intact along with the aril. This is all swallowed whole and the aril digested before the naked seed is later regurgitated. Often at the back door! Some of these birds were frequently hand-fed by Bill and in order to be able to fit in some mealworms they needed to first regurgitate useless seeds.

Wendy Cooper 2019

# ***Regent Bowerbird*** ***(Sericulus chrysocephalus)***

2013

synthetic polymer paint on panel  
Private Collection, New South Wales

Maiden's Blush trees are forest giants with wonderful high arching plank buttresses; this subspecies is restricted to the Wet Tropics. The large leaves for the painting of Regent Bowerbirds were easy enough to collect from low branches but Bill resorted to a .22 rifle to shoot down a small stem with fruit, that was visible high up in the forest canopy.

Wendy Cooper, 2019

## **Sarah Scragg**

### ***Birdman, The art of William T. Cooper***

2014

28:00min, sound

Courtesy of the artist

***Fruits of the Australian Tropical Rainforest*, published in 1994 is a flora for the region using fruits as the main focus for identification.**

Tropical Botanist E.J.H. Corner commented:

...it is a masterpiece of scientific accuracy. I have perused it, read the introductory pages and examined many plates in detail – cones, drupes, seeds, capsules, legumes...A real test of the artist's accuracy is to be found in the delineation of the fibres of the husks of palm fruits... Thank goodness I have survived to see this leading example for other countries blessed with rainforest. To think that Kew once advised botanists not to collect fruiting material because it could not be identified! ...it is a pioneer work of outstanding merit because the illustrations in colour are scientifically accurate and detailed for identification to the species. Most floristic books illustrate flowers not fruits, which are more varied but overlooked because they are not known. Thus the book has taken many years to complete. It has set an example of the highest quality that other tropical lands of rain forest should emulate...