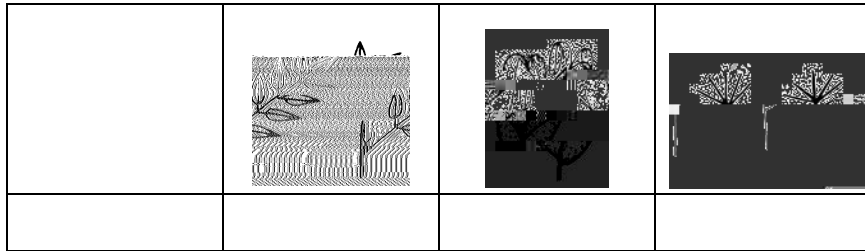


## KEY TO GROUP 2

Leaves with numerous parallel veins, chiefly herbs, sometimes epiphytic, **if** veins obscure then plants herbaceous and often epiphytic, **if** woody then floral parts are in multiples of 3. (All are monocots)



- 1 Plants woody, often tall, leaves undivided or palmately (see sketch A ! like a hand) or pinnately divided (B) (palms, pandanus, grass trees)

go to **Group 2.A**

1\*

**GROUP 2.A** Plants woody, usually tall, leaves various.

*Archontophoenix alexandrae* (Alexandra Palm – Arecaceae)

*Archontophoenix*, from Greek *archon* – chieftain, and *Phoenix* – the date palm, referring to its majestic appearance.

A feather-leafed palm with a solitary trunk, enlarged at the base. Inflorescence to 1 m long; separate male and female flowers, perianth **white to cream**. Fruit are bright red at maturity, 8-14 mm long.

*Livistona decora* (Fan Palm, Cabbage Tree Palm, formerly *Livistona decipiens* – Arecaceae)

*Livistona* is named after Patrick Murray, Baron Livingston, whose garden later became the Edinburgh Botanic Gardens.

Tall fan-leafed palm with a solitary trunk. The base of the finely divided leaves is blackish. Leaves have been used for many purposes by aborigines and early settlers. Inflorescence to 3.5 m long; flowers **yellow**; fruit shiny black at maturity 12-18 mm long.

Habit of *A. alexandrae*

Habit of *L. decora*

Habit of *Pandanus* sp.

*Pandanus tectorius* (Pandanus or Screw Pine – Pandanaceae)

*Pandanus*, from the Malay word for screw pines, *pandan*.

This beachfront species has leaves that are spirally twisted, in older trees, stems may be branched. Prop or stilt roots usually present. The fruiting body resembles a large pineapple; individual nuts separate from the core at maturity.

*Pandanus cookii* (formerly *Pandanus whitei*), does not usually have stilt roots although there may be protuberances

*Xanthorrhoea johnsonii* (Grass Tree – Xanthorrhoeaceae)

*Xanthorrhoea*, from the Greek words *xantho* – yellow, and *rheo* – to flow, referring to the yellow resin that is often produced from the leaves.

This plant has a thick trunk, topped by numerous long, narrow leaves forming a skirt. An old flower spike is often present. Flowers are **white to cream**; fruit 3 lobed capsules. The chief pollinators are butterflies. Nectar mixed in water makes a sweet drink – ignore the bugs! Resin from the leaves has been used to attach spear heads and for sealing holes.

**GROUP 2.B Flowers have readily recognized sepals and/or petals (not modified), usually white, red or blue.**

*Commelina ensifolia* (Wandering Jew, Scurvy Grass – Commelinaceae)

*Commelina*, named by Linnaeus after Jan and Kaspar Commelin, Dutch botanists. Weak sprawling plants, rooting at the nodes. **Blue** flowers initially enclosed within a green spathe ( ). Fruit a dry dehiscent capsule opening with 2-3 valves. Several other species may be encountered.

*Lomandra longifolia* (Narrow-leaved Mat Rush – Laxmanniaceae)

*Lomandra*, from the Greek *loma* – margin or border, and *andros* – male, referring to the nature of the anthers.

Tufted plants with stiff narrow leaves. Inflorescence usually a panicle of clusters, male panicles larger than females, flowers **white to mauve**. Leaf bases, flowers and seeds are edible; fruit a 3-valved capsule. Leaves can be used for weaving. A similar species is *L. hystrix*, but it usually has 4 or more branches per node of the inflorescence rather than 2.



*X. johnsonii*



*C. ensifolia*



*L. longifolia*

*Murdannia graminea* (Slug Herb, Pink Swamp Lily – Commelinaceae)

*Murdannia* named for Murdan Aly, an Indian botanist.

This small grass-like plant up to 40 cm high, prefers moist grassland habitats. It usually flowers in February and March. Flowers have 3 **mauve or pink** petals, forming sprays at the end of the stem; fruit a 3-valved capsule to 1 cm long.

***Haemodorum coccineum*** (Scarlet Bloodroot – Haemodoraceae)

*Haemodorum*, from the Greek words *haima* – blood, and *doron* – gift, referring to the colour of the flowers and the sap in many parts.

Herb to 1 m tall, the mainly basal strap-like leaves die back in winter. Panicles of dark **red** flowers are carried well above the leaves. Fruit a red, 3-lobed capsule. The red sap in the rhizome may be used as a dyestuff.

***Dianella caerulea*** (Blue Flax Lily – Hemerocallidaceae)

*Dianella* a diminutive of Diana, goddess of the hunt, referring to the woodland habitat.

The long linear leaves alternate along the stem but successive leaves are arranged on opposite sides of the stem, thus 1 to one side and then the next at 180° to it but further up the stem (distichous). Sheaths closed at the base on young leaves. The **blue** flowers with yellow stamens are borne in panicles, which may be spreading or narrow. Other species may occur.

Berries blue, edible. Leaves used for making nets and baskets by indigenous people.

*M. graminea*

*H. coccineum*

*D. caerulea*

*Agave vivipara* vitr



*A. vivipara* var. *vivipara*



*P. infundibularis*

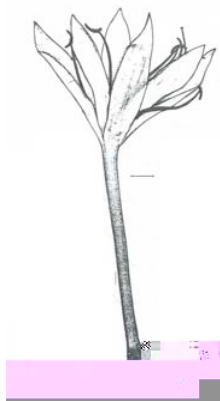
***Crinum pedunculatum*** (Swamp Lily, River Lily, Spider Lily – Amaryllidaceae)

*Crinum*, from the Greek *crinon* – a lily.

This lily with strap-like leaves, produces large, **white** tubular flowers in summer. The filaments (stalk of the stamens) are white at the base but becoming dark pink near the top. Fruit are green capsules. The mucilaginous sap can be used to soothe the effect of stings. *Crinum angustifolium* (Field Lily) can be distinguished by leaves being 3-6 mm wide rather than up to 10 cm wide, there are also some floral differences.

***Eustrephus latifolius*** (Wombat Berry – Laxmanniaceae)

*Eustrephus*, from the Greek *eu* – well, and *strepho* – to twine, referring to the climbing habit. Leaves linear to lanceolate, both surfaces are dull, and there are several equally distinct longitudinal veins. Two to ten **pink** flowers in axillary umbels (flower stalks arise from a common point), petals fringed on margin; fruit globular orange, dehiscent. This species may be confused with *Geitonoplesium cymosum* (Scrambling Lily – Hemerocallidaceae). However here the leaves have a shiny upper surface and the midvein is more prominent than the other veins; the flowers are **mauve to white**, fruit black, indehiscent.



*C. pedunculatum*



*E. latifolius*



*Geitonoplesium cymosum*

**Orchids** recorded for the island are indicated in the list of “Vascular plants collected on Magnetic360.35s (Appendix 1). For more details refer to a specialist book.

**GROUP 2.C Leaf sheath closed at the base, stem usually solid, often triangular. Sedges, usually in moist areas.**

*Scleria sphacelata* (Razor Grass – Cyperaceae)

*Scleria*, from *scleros* a Greek word referring to the hard fruits.

Species in this genus are readily recognized by the distinctive whitish nut ( ).

This plant grows to 1 m tall, and has triangular stems. The flat leaves are roughened on the margins.

*Abildgaardia vaginata* (formerly



**GROUP 2.D Branches of the inflorescence arise from the same point or nearly. (Grasses)**

*Chloris inflata* (Purpletop Chloris, Purpletop Rhodes Grass – Poaceae)\*

*Chloris*, from *chloros* – green, Chloris was the Greek goddess of flowers.

Plant usually about 50 cm tall, but may be up to 1 m. Inflorescence purplish, composed of 6-15 digitate (like fingers from one point) spikes arranged in 1-2 whorls at the top of the stem.

*Eleusine indica* (Crowsfoot Grass – Poaceae)\*

*Eleusine*, Eleusis was the site of the temple of Ceres, the goddess of the harvest.

The inflorescence of this tufted, more or less procumbent grass is a subdigitate panicle; 2-6 spikes are arranged digitately with 1 usually attached below the others on the stem ( ).

*Dactyloctenium aegyptium* (Coast Finger Grass, Coastal Button Grass – Poaceae)\*

*Dactyloctenium*, from the Greek *daktylos* – a finger, and *ktenos* – comb, alluding to the comb-



**GROUP 2.E** Mature plants usually less than 1 m high. SEE also Group 2F.  
**(Grasses)**

*Melinis repens* (Red Natal Grass, formerly *Rhynchelytrum repens* – Poaceae)\*

*Melinis*,

*Spinifex sericeus* (Hairy Spinifex, Beach Spinifex – Poaceae)  
*Spinifex*



*Eragrostis* spp.

*T. triandra*



*H. contortus*

*H. triticeus*

## GROUP 2.F Plants usually more than 1 m tall. (Grasses)

*Phragmites vallisneria* (Reed Grass, formerly *Phragmites karka*, – Poaceae)

*Phragmites* is derived from the Greek *phragma* – a fence or screen, as it usually grows in dense colonies, so forming a barrier.

This grass is rarely less than 1.5 m tall, grows in wet areas such as in the lagoon at Horseshoe Bay, the tall stems arise from creeping rhizomes. The lowest node of the inflorescence usually has many branches, and only a few spikelets are borne on these lower branches; the upper glume is 4-6 mm long. *Phragmites australis* has only a few branches arising at the lower nodes of the inflorescence; the upper glume is 5-9 mm long.

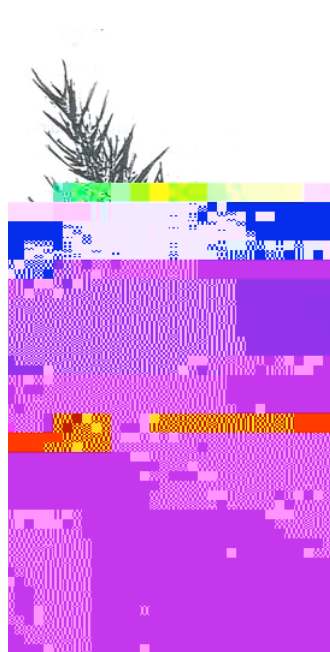
*Megathyrsus maximus* (Guinea Grass, formerly *Panicum maximum* – Poaceae)\*.

*Megathyrsus* refers to the large inflorescence also known as a thyrsus. *Panicum* is derived from the Latin name for millet or bread, *panis*.

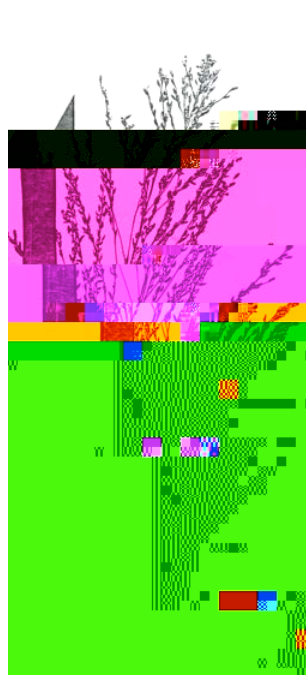
A tall clumping grass to 2 m tall, easily recognized by its very open panicle, with mostly whorled branches and solitary spikelets. This large open panicle is a characteristic of the genus. Introduced from Africa.

*Mnesithea rottboellioides* (Northern Cane Grass, formerly *Coelorachis rottboellioides*) – Poaceae).

*Mnesithea* is named for Mnesitheos, a Greek physician who was interested in edible plants. A tall erect grass to 3 m tall, usually found in moist areas. Readily recognized by the inflorescence, which is a panicle of cylindrical racemes, and the paired spikelets which at maturity break off at the joints ( ).



*P. vallisneria*



*Me. maximus*



*Mn. rottboellioides*

*Cymbopogon refractus* (Barbed Wire Grass – Poaceae)

*Cymbopogon*, from the Greek *kumbe* – boat, and *pogon* – beard, referring to the boat-shaped spatheoles ( ) subtending the racemes.

This plant ranges from 30 to 150 cm tall. As with all the other species of this genus, the leaves are faintly aromatic when crushed resulting in a lemony smell. The inflorescence is composed of paired racemes reflexed at maturity but are not woolly. These racemes are subtended by a reddish spatheole ( ). There are two other species, which may be noticed, because both have prominent silky hairs associated with the inflorescence.

*Cymbopogon bombycinus* (Silky Heads, Citronella Grass, Silky Oil Grass)

Spikelets densely covered with silky hairs 4-7 mm long which arise from the callus

*U. m*