

## Sapta Faiv

# Wokim ol samting bilong ai bilong gaden

Long Reite, olgeta gaden taro i gat sut o ai bilong gaden (*wating*). *Patuki* [stori] yet em tokim ol tumbuna long planim gaden olsem insait long tupela taro stori bilong ol Reite: *Samat Matakaring Patuki* na *Mai'anderei Patuki*. Taro 'kapa' (Plate 7-1) em i nambawan kain taro *Patuki* bin givim ol tumbuna.

Taim taro redi pinis long gaden, ol man save planim ol samting bilong *wating* gen long rot i stap arere long gaden. Dispela wok em bilong banisim gaden. Ol save tok, 'pasim rot bilong taro'. Taro bai no inap ranawe, na bai stap longpela taim long gaden.

## Chapter Five

# Preparations for garden rituals

In Reite, all taro gardens are planted with a central ritual planting (lit. 'garden's shoot'). The form of this planting is specific to Reite, and it was specified by the Taro deities (*Pel Patuki*) in the two origin myths of taro: *Samat Matakaring Patuki* and *Mai'anderei Patuki*. These are the plants that mythic ancestors (*Patuki*) designated as essential to the growth of the particular taro varieties they revealed to Reite people. Taro 'kapa' (Plate 7-1) is the original strain of taro given to Reite people by *Patuki*.

When taro from these gardens is ready for harvest, a similar planting is made on the path that leads to and from the garden. This prevents the spirit of the taro from leaving the garden of its own will, and means the garden will have tubers in the ground for many months. This planting is called 'closing the road of the taro'.

## ***Kapuipei***

### **Klinim pes**

Ol meri, taim ol kalapim skin na stap long haus, ol save klinim pes long dispela *Kapuipei* (Plate 5-1, 5-2), long mekim skin tait na lukluk gutpela long ol ai bilong ol manmeri long ples. Na ol manki tu, taim bilong wasim ol long *Kandang dau* (Sapta 4, Plate 4-1), ol bai wasim pes bilong ol wantaim *Kapuipei*, long moning taim yet na pes bilong ol bai kamap yelo liklik. Long bihainim dispela pasin, ol manki bai kamap smat long ai bilong ol man.

I gat narapela yus long *Kapuipei* tu na em bilong planim long ai bilong gaden olsem bilong bilasim ples.

## ***Turik upitapoli***

### **Planim ai bilong gaden**

Bipo yet, *Patuki* bin planim ai bilong gaden wantaim dispela *Turik upitapoli* (Plate 5-3), na mipela bihainim dispela pasin i kam long nau.

## ***Coleus blumei*<sup>1</sup>**

### **Cleaning faces**

When young girls experience their first menses (seclusion/initiation), their faces are washed with *Coleus blumei* (Plate 5-1, 5-2) to make their skin look tight and fresh. Young men too, before they appear from their initiation seclusion, wash with *Curcuma longa* (Chapter 4, Plate 4-1) and wash their face with *Coleus blumei*, giving the face a yellow hue. This makes young men look good when they emerge from seclusion to face the village community in the early morning.

*Coleus blumei* is also planted in the eye/shoot of the garden for decorative purposes.

## ***Codiaeum variegatum*<sup>2</sup>**

### **Ritual planting**

*Codiaeum variegatum* (Plate 5-3) is planted as part of the ritual establishing of the 'eye' or centre of the garden as *Patuki* decreed. We still follow the procedure handed down by *Patuki*, who planted this in the 'eye' of the garden.

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1. *Coleus blumei* or *Coleus amboinicus* (Lamiaceae).

2. *Codiaeum variegatum* (Euphorbiaceae), purpur, croton.



Plate 5-1: *Kapuipui (Coleus blumei)*



Plate 5-2: *Kapuipui (Coleus blumei)*



Plate 5-3: *Turik upitapoli (Codiaeum variegatum)*

## ***Asarsing/Narengding***

### **Wasim pikinini na bilong ai bilong gaden**

Mipela save yusim dispela smel purpur, mipela kolim *Asarsing* (Plate 5-4), long mekim gaden kol. Smel bilong en mekim na san mas kol. Em i no inap hatim ol taro tumas, gaden bai no inap hat tumas. Tru taim yu wok, bai yu tuhat, tasol ol kru bilong samting bai no inap bagarap.

Olsem long bihainim pasin tumbuna, mipela yusim *Asarsing* long wasim ol nupela bebi (lukim 'Laspela hap long buk 2'). Taim yu wokim dispela pasin, olsem mipela kolim wasim pikinini (*nek sulet*), bai yu putim *Asarsing* long plet na putim bebi antap long dispela bet purpur. Bihain mipela subim plet i go ausait long haus long han bilong ol kandere na ol bai wasim pikinini.

Tu, mipela save yusim long haus pisin na smel bilong en bai mekim ol pisin kamap long diwai. Narapela yus long en, em bilong putim ofa long bun bilong ol tumbuna o long rop diwai bilong wokim ren. Smel bai kisim rop o diwai, na ples bai kol na ren bai kam.

## ***Euodia hortensis*<sup>3</sup>**

### **To promote growth**

We use the aromatic herb *Euodia hortensis* (Plate 5-4) to keep the garden cool so the sun does not burn the young taro shoots. When you work, you will sweat, but the shoots will stay fresh.

We also use *Euodia hortensis* for washing new born babies (see Appendix 2). As part of this ritual we cover a wooden plate with this aromatic herb and place the new born on top of the *Euodia hortensis* leaves. The baby is then handed on this plate out of the house through a new opening in the rear wall to their maternal kin for their first washing.

*Euodia hortensis* is also placed in bird hides and the aromatic smell attracts birds to the tree. Another use of *Euodia hortensis* is in sacrificial offerings to the bones of ancestors or to particular vines for weather magic. The fragrance makes the area cool, encouraging rain to come.

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3. *Euodia hortensis* (Rutaceae).





Plate 5-4: *Asarsing/Narengding (Euodia hortensis)*

## ***Tawau***

### **Kamapim taro**

*Tawau* (Plate 5-5), mipela yusim bilong mekim graun mas malmalum, na taro mas kamap. Dispela aibika i gat planti spet bilong en, na mipela planim bai mekim graun malmalum, na taro bai kamap. *Tawau* em save smat long kamap, na ol taro mas lukim na kamap olsem. Em i gat hap tok bilong en. Mipela save singautim sta, na planim. Long nait, dispela hap mas i kamap wet wantaim pispis bilong sta, mipela kolim *puing torong*. Aibika em samting i gat planti spet bilong en. Sta mas kam, na poroman wantaim em, na givim wara long gaden.

## ***Hibiscus manihot*<sup>4</sup>**

### **Helping taro grow**

*Hibiscus manihot* (Plate 5-5) has plenty of glutinous sap and planting it makes the garden soil friable. It is also a fast growing plant that encourages the taro plants to grow in a similar manner. There is a spell for this planting. We call the name of the last star in the sky before dawn. This encourages the dew to gather in the garden and water the taro. The star and the aibika are friends and performing this ritual ensures it will water the garden with dew.



Plate 5-5: *Tawau* (*Hibiscus manihot*)

## ***Siwinsing***

### Smel kunai

*Siwinsing*, em i wanpela kunai i gat smel olsem muli (Plate 5-6). Em bai givim gutpela smel long gaden, na taro bai swit.

## ***Cymbopogon citratus*<sup>5</sup>**

### Aromatic grass

*Cymbopogon citratus* is a lemon scented grass (Plate 5-6). When planted, it makes the garden smell nice and the taro taste sweet.

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4. *Hibiscus manihot* (Malvaceae), aibika.

5. *Cymbopogon citratus* (Poaceae), smel kunai, lemon grass.

## ***Usau anang***

### San banana

Bipo tru, taim fers man bilong mipela kisim taro long *Patuki*, em yet bin planim wantaim *Usau anang* (Plate 5-7). Mipela no inap kisim narapela banana na planim long ai bilong gaden.



**Plate 5-6: *Siwinsing*  
(*Cymbopogon citratus*)**

## ***Musa sp.*<sup>6</sup>**

### Sun banana

The taro deity gave our ancestors this *Musa sp.* (Plate 5-7) to plant alongside taro in their gardens. It is this species that we plant with taro to this day.



**Plate 5-7: *Usau anang*  
(*Musa sp.*)**

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6. *Musa sp.* (Musaceae), san banana, sun banana.

## ***Saapung teti***

### **Bilong kamapim taro**

Dispela *Saapung teti* (Plate 5-8, 5-9), mipela save planim long gaden bilong kamapim taro *kapa stret* (Plate 7-1). Mipela save kisim kru bilong en na planim wantaim taro. Kamap bilong dispela rop em hariap, na wankain mipela laikim taro kamap, olsem mipela save yusim.

## ***Serung***

### **Bilong pasim rot bilong taro**

Long pasim rot bilong taro mipela save planim *Serung* (Plate 5-10). Em bilong mekim taro mas kamap strong. Taim bilong kaikaim, em no ken malmalum.

## ***Blumea riparia***<sup>7</sup>

### **Growing taro**

We plant *Blumea riparia* (Plate 5-8, 5-9) with the variety of taro called '*kapa*' (Plate 7-1). A young shoot of *Blumea riparia* is planted with the taro. It is a fast growing vine which encourages the taro to grow in a similar manner.

## ***Murraya* sp.**<sup>8</sup>

### **Closing the road of the taro**

For plantings to block the path out of the garden we plant a border of *Murraya* sp. (Plate 5-10). This makes the taro tubers firm, so they are not soft and watery when cooked.

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7. *Blumea riparia* (Bl.) DC (Asteraceae). Alternative identification: (Acanthaceae).

8. *Murraya* sp. (Rutaceae), mock orange.





Plate 5-8: *Saapung teti*  
(*Blumea riparia*)



Plate 5-9: *Saapung teti*  
(*Blumea riparia*)



Plate 5-10: *Serung* (*Murraya* sp.)

## ***Alucaru'ung***

Bilong pasim rot bilong taro

Mipela save kisim lip bilong *Alucaru'ung* (Plate 5-11, 5-12) na pasim rot bilong taro wantaim. Em i strongpela rop, na em bai mekim kaikai bilong taro strong.

## ***Dichapetalum* sp.<sup>9</sup>**

Closing the road of the taro

We use the leaves of the *Dichapetalum* sp. (Plate 5-11, 5-12) when we block the road of the taro. It is a tough vine which makes the taro tubers firm.



Plate 5-11: *Alucaru'ung* (*Dichapetalum* sp.)



Plate 5-12: *Alucaru'ung* (*Dichapetalum* sp.)

## ***Su alu***

### **Bilong pasim rot bilong taro**

*Su alu* (Plate 5-13, 5-14) em wanpela strongpela rop mipela save yusim long pasim rot bilong taro. Mipela save kisim lip bilong en, na bungim wantaim ol narapela rop, na pasim rot bilong taro.



**Plate 5-13: *Su alu* (*Smilax* sp.)**



**Plate 5-14: *Su alu* (*Smilax* sp.)**

## ***Smilax* sp.<sup>10</sup>**

### **Closing the road of the taro**

*Smilax* sp. (Plate 5-13, 5-14) is a very strong vine used in the planting that closes the road of the taro. We use it together with other vines for securing the taro in the garden.

10. *Smilax* sp. (Smilacaceae).

## **Kamma**

### **Kamapim taro**

*Kamma* (Plate 5-15), em i 'wara bilong taro' (*pel'ya tupong*) o mipela save tok 'wail banana'. Long kastom, mipela kisim bun bilong pik na brukim namel bilong *Kamma* wantaim. Kisim wara long en na tromoi long gaden. Bai yu wokim long moning na tambuim ol man long gaden long tupela wik samting. Dispela bai mekim taro kamap hariap. Trutru dispela em i no 'wail banana', em narapela samting. Tasol yu lukim, bai yu inap ting 'em wanpela kain banana', olsem mipela save tok 'wail banana'. Em i wara bilong taro (*pel'ya tupong*), bilong mekim taro kamap gut. Bai yu pulimapim wara bilong *Kamma* wantaim wara bilong daunwara bilong ples bilong taro *Patuki*, na wasim taro wantaim, na taro bai kamap gut.

## **Weng**

### **Givim gutpela smel long taro**

Dispela *Weng* (Plate 5-16) em wanpela lip diwai i gat gutpela smel. Mipela planim long gaden na em bai mekim taro i gat gutpela smel bilong en.

Long ol pasin tumbuna, mipela yusim *Weng* bilong putim ofa long rop bilong wokim ren.

## ***Heliconia papuana*<sup>11</sup>**

### **Growing taro**

*Heliconia papuana* (Plate 5-15) is named 'wild banana' in Tok Pisin. It is 'the water for taro'. The *Heliconia papuana* stem is broken with the bone of a pig and the water inside the stem is poured over the newly planted taro. Do this in the morning, and taboo everyone from entering the garden for about two weeks. This makes the taro grow well and quickly. It is not a banana species really, but looks like one, so we say 'wild banana'. It is the water for the taro (*pel'ya tupong*). Take the juice from the stem and mix it with water from the pool where the taro deity first appeared and throw this over the taro in the garden. It will make the taro grow well.

## ***Litsea* sp.<sup>12</sup>**

### **Making taro fragrant**

This *Litsea* sp. (Plate 5-16) is a tree that has highly aromatic leaves. We plant it in the garden so as to give a good aroma to the taro.

We also use it in making sacrifices to make rain.

11. *Heliconia papuana* (Heliconiaceae), wail banana, wild banana.

12. *Litsea* sp. (Lauraceae).





Plate 5-15: *Kamma*  
(*Heliconia papuana*)



Plate 5-16: *Weng*  
(*Litsea* sp.)

## ***Ponung***

### Strongim taro

*Ponung* em wanpela strongpela diwai (Plate 5-17) na mipela kisim lip bilong en na planim wantaim taro na em bai mekim taro strong.

## ***Intsia bijuga*<sup>13</sup>**

### Making taro strong

*Intsia bijuga* is a hardwood species (Plate 5-17). We bury its leaves in the eye of the garden to make the taro strong.

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13. *Intsia bijuga* (Leguminosae), kwila, ironwood.

## **Wikiwiki**

### **Givim gutpela smel long taro na pulim ol pisin**

Mipela save planim *Wikiwiki* (Plate 5-18) bilong mekim ol samting long gaden smel gutpela. Olsem mipela yusim bilong pasim rot bilong taro, na taro bai smel nais. Na bilong haus pisin tu, kaikai bilong diwai mas i gat smel i go longwe, em mekim smel nais, na amamasim ol pisin long kam.

Bilong putim ofa long rop bilong wokim ren, yu ken kisim tu.

## ***Proiphys amboinensis*<sup>14</sup>**

### **Making taro fragrant and attracting birds**

We use *Proiphys amboinensis* (Plate 5-18) to make the garden smell good and to give a good aroma to the taro. It is also used to attract birds to a tree with a hunting hide in it. This species makes the smell of the fruits permeate a long way and attract birds.

Also *Proiphys amboinensis* can be used in sacrifices to make rain.



**Plate 5-17: *Ponung* (*Intsia bijuga*)**



**Plate 5-18: *Wikiwiki* (*Proiphys amboinensis*)**