

S.G.A.P. ACACIA STUDY GROUP
NEWSLETTER NO. 13
APRIL 1973

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This is somewhat earlier in the month than usual but I wanted to give you (and myself) as much time as possible to order seeds, and pay subs, if not already paid, before I go away.

MEMBERSHIP

Three new members have joined the Group since last N/L. They are:-

Cousins, Dr G 28 Brighton Avenue, Toronto, NSW 2283
Mills, Mrs P M 139 Waratah Street, Katoomba, NSW 2780
Primrose, B E The King's School, Parramatta, NSW 2150

Several members have not paid the \$1.00 sub. for 1973. If a red tick appears here you are one of them. If sub. not received by 15th May, membership will lapse. You may send P/N, stamps, \$1 note or cheque.

FINANCE

Balance as at date of N/L No. 12		\$31.37
Add:	subscriptions	\$38.00
	donations	<u>\$2.00</u>
		\$71.37
Less:	Members List	\$5.98
	Postage on N/L No. 12	\$6.50
	900 seed Envelopes	\$4.68
	Foolscap envelopes	<u>\$0.45</u>
		<u>\$17.61</u>
		\$53.76

SEED LIST

A number of interesting seeds have been added, thanks mainly to Bruce Copley and Pat Conrick. Pat has contributed, amongst many others, an *A. retinodes* v. *oraria* which was described in his words in N/L No. 12 as being attractive with drooping habit and profuse flowers. The *A. cyclophylla* also came from him. This is a first cousin to *A. rotundifolia* with the same attractive spiral seed pods.

Other regular donors include Mrs Oxnam, Mrs Simmons and Mrs Perkins.

	<u>Additions</u>	<u>Deletions</u>
<i>A. baileyana</i> v. <i>purpurea</i>	<i>A. irrorata</i>	<i>A. diptera</i>
<i>A. colletioides</i>	<i>A. menzellii</i>	<i>A. graffiana</i>
<i>A. cyclophylla</i>	<i>A. pinguifolia</i>	<i>A. heteroclita</i>
<i>A. decurrens</i> (dwarf)	<i>A. retinodes</i> v. <i>oraria</i>	<i>A. huegelii</i>
<i>A. divergens</i>	<i>A. retivenia</i>	<i>A. incurva</i>
<i>A. glandulicarpa</i>	<i>A. rhetinocarpa</i>	<i>A. leptopetala</i>
<i>A. idiomorpha</i>	<i>A. sclerophylla</i> v. <i>teretiuscula</i>	<i>A. linophylla</i>
	<i>A. silvestris</i>	<i>A. longiphylloidea</i>
		<i>A. longissima</i>

Must remind you again that the seed bank will be closing down mid May and I can only fill orders received by the 15th. I expect to be back home early in November so should be able to start up again about the middle of November.

Would anyone like to help me out by trying some unidentified seeds? During the two years I've been running the Group I have accumulated a few packets labelled optimistically "Acacia species?" – sometimes the packet even says where they were collected!! I haven't had time to try all these myself so if several members would volunteer to try two or three (or more if you like) we may get somewhere.

Seed of *A. floribunda*: Since I put out the request for this several members have written to say that theirs never sets seed. I have four medium sized trees myself and have never seen a seed pod. Does anyone know where this species does set seed in reasonable quantity? I still want it for the seed bank which has practically none left.

NAME CHANGES

Just to make life more difficult, the following names have been changed. The first three are on our seed list, so you should make the necessary alterations:-

<i>A. diffusa</i>	has become	<i>A. genistifolia</i>
<i>A. pugioniformis</i>	has become	<i>A. quadrilateralis</i>
<i>A. xylocarpa</i>	has become	<i>A. orthocarpa</i>
<i>A. diptera</i>	has become	<i>A. willdenowiana</i>
<i>A. hakeoides</i> v. <i>angustifolia</i> , and	have become	<i>A. willdenowiana</i> (Court)
<i>A. ligulata</i> v. <i>angustifolia</i>		
<i>A. luehmanii</i>	has become	<i>A. sublanata</i>
<i>A. pumila</i>	has become	<i>A. bynoeana</i>

(The former *A. bynoeana* was changed some considerable time ago to *A. wilhelmiana*).

MEMBERS' COMMENTS

Ross Macdonald, who as you know recently moved house, had a number of **acacias in pots** awaiting transfer to his new garden. The list of those which flowered was a great surprise to me. Here it is:-

A. aspera, *A. botrycephala*, *A. calamifolia*, *A. deanei*, *A. decora*, *A. diffusa*, *A. glandulicarpa*, *A. hakeoides*, *A. lanigera*, *A. notabilis* (!!), *A. rotundifolia*, *A. suaveolens*, *A. tayloriana*, *A. vestita*.

Miss Shadgett has flowered ***A. meisneri* in a tub**. I regard this as something of an achievement because as far as I know she is the only member growing this successfully. Miss S has one in pot and three in the ground. At approximately 40cm high and about two years old all have produced a few flowers. This sounds attractive with glaucous phyllodes and red new growth.

Miss Shadgett also reports on several other small species which are growing well and strongly after planting out. Finally she sends the following on ***A. uncinata***. Have not succeeded with this myself but can thoroughly endorse all her words of praise for this, which must be one of our most beautiful acacia shrubs:- "Purchased from SGAP in March 1971, planted out in May same year. It commenced flowering in May 1972 and continued until October. At 20 months after planting (Jan 1973) it has commenced flowering profusely again and looks as if it will go on for many months. Now about 1½ m high it is a graceful shrub and can be recommended both for its beauty, early flowering and long flowering season to anyone beginning a new garden." (Planted on side of hill, acid loam soil over sandy clay and rocky subsoil. Annual rainfall 40", Temp 35F to 95F, ¾ sun. Altitude 1750 ft).

Pat Conrick reports the **effect of frost** on the following species:

A. elata, *A. pentadenia*, *A. gilbertii* – all to 2m – died.

A. continua, *A. rotundifolia* – appeared dead but shot from ground level in three to six months

A. suaveolens – flower buds burnt off

A. pulchella – tip burn to young growth

A. rupicola – unsheltered part burnt. Part growing near *Hakea varia* unaffected.

Reports such as this are useful and constructive. We could do with many more. They are not just read and forgotten but are placed on permanent record in my files.

HOMEWORK

I've had in mind for some time the idea of asking you to let me have a description of your best and favourite acacia under 1.5 metres, the smaller the better. Now that Miss Shadgett has made the first contribution would you all please do likewise. Please also include relevant details re soil, rainfall, etc to save me looking up your record sheets.

USE OF BORAX

In N/L No. 10 I quoted Pax Lindsay in an extract from his book on pests and diseases stating that acacias suffer from defoliation and die-back when boron is deficient in the soil, and that this can be remedied by the application of a tea-spoonful of borax watered into a square yard. I'm glad to be able to report the complete recovery of a very sick looking *A. celastrifolia* with this treatment.

BOOKS

"A Handbook to Plants in Victoria" Volume 11, has been published and sells at \$21. Written by J E Willis, recently retired from Royal Botanic Gardens, Melbourne, the book covers all dicotyledons known to occur in Victoria, a total of 2290 species (including 550 introduced and now naturalized). The acacia section covers 93 species and has been written by Mr A B Court, Acacia Expert at RBG Melbourne.

SPECIES FOR IDENTIFICATION

When you send specimens to me (or to any Herbarium) for identification, please ensure that you have a reasonably large and good specimen, 7" to 8" long, bearing flowers. It is even better if you have the patience to collect the seed and wait for the flower or vice versa. I make this plea because as you know I'm no expert on these matters and nine times out of ten the specimen eventually has to be taken to the Herbarium for confirmation, even if I think I know what it is. And invariably Dr Tindale complains that the specimen is too small and/or scruffy for identification.

The specimen should also be properly dried. This done by placing it between sheets of newspaper under a heavy weight. The paper should be changed every day or every two days at the outside, for a week or so, by which time the specimen should be in reasonable condition.

PERSONAL

As mentioned in last N/L I expect to be leaving Sydney about mid-June and hope to visit many members during the ensuing 4½ months. If you want to write while I'm away, do so by all means. The letter will catch up with me somewhere. Better not send specimens, though. Keep them until November.

I'm hoping to be able to make it to the Herberton district in north Queensland where the elusive *A. purpureapetala* – the only known acacia with mauve-pink flowers – is sometimes to be found. According to Queensland Herbarium records this was first found in 1904 by J Stirling and has since been sighted in 1908 by Dr Bancroft, in 1938 by Gallogly, in 1962 by C H Gittins and in 1969 by R W Groves. Mr Gittins, I believe now in his seventies, lives in Sydney suburbia and I have an appointment to go and visit him as soon as the latest threat of a petrol strike is removed. I was so excited at the prospect of meeting him that I forgot to ask whether he has a photograph so I'll let you know in next N/L.

That's all for now. Next N/L probably August. Don't forget to order seeds if you want any for next spring planting.

Inez Armitage