Acacia brunioides

Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) Inc.

ACACIA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER

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Note: If you wish to view or download previous Study Group Newsletters, they are available on the Study Group website. The address is:

https://anpsa.org.au/acaciaSG

From The Leader

Dear Members

Welcome to our first newsletter for 2023 which I hope will be a great year for all of us growing Acacias.

In our garden Sue and I usually wait until we have had some autumn rains before we do much new planting – and a few days ago we had a storm come through that gave us 24mm in probably less than an hour. Since then we have had a few more showers and the garden is looking ready for some of the new plants that we have ready for planting – including a few wattles.

Two of the wattles that we have for planting are *Acacia chrysocephala* and *Acacia holosericea*. In relation to *A. chrysocephala*, we did previously have a plant growing near our front door, a small quite compact bush about 30cm high that flowered quite brilliantly in winter. We were frequently asked by visitors what species it was, it was very showy when in flower. Sadly that plant died and we hadn't replaced it – it appears to be not readily available in nurseries. However, at the recent plant sale of the Friends of the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne, they had plants for sale and I obtained 2 for our garden.

In relation to *Acacia holosericea*, I was fortunate to recently be given a plant – a well grown plant about 1m high in a large pot. I have seen it growing naturally in northern Australia but have not seen it in any gardens in Melbourne. I note that the Elliot and Jones Enyclopaedia (Volume 2) describes it as "a handsome wattle well suited to tropical and inland areas" and "has proved to be very adaptable in cultivation and is gaining popularity in subtropical areas such as around Brisbane". This doesn't inspire too much confidence as to how successful it may be in Melbourne, but perhaps someone may like to give me some advice as to how best to try growing it here. Perhaps I should keep it in a pot?

Thank you to those members who have provided input to this newsletter. The newsletter relies upon these contributions, whether they be articles or photographs. I am happy to receive contributions at any time, please think about whether you have something you can contribute – we really do need more newsletter contributions from members.

Bill Aitchison

Vale – Doug White

17.1.1933 – 4.2.2023

Sadly we report the passing of one of our Study Group members, Doug White. Doug had been a member of our Study Group since 2007. He was a great supporter of the Study Group, providing regular contributions to our newsletter, and also donating seed to our Seed Bank.

Doug loved his garden and was an enthusiastic grower of native plants. He grew a lot of different Acacias, although his main interest was banksias. He was a long-time supporter and volunteer at the Euroa Arboretum and a committed environmentalist.

In 2020 Doug's daughter Anna made a short film with Doug, in his garden. Anna is happy to share the link with Acacia Study Group members – the link is https://vimeo.com/446803592.

Welcome

A special welcome to the following new member to the Study Group.

Barrie Gallacher, Balwyn North, Vic

Barrie has been a member of the Australian Plants Society for many years, and has also for a number of years volunteered as a Garden Ambassador at the Royal Botanic Gardens Cranbourne.

From Members and Readers

Elva Teague (15 December 2022) wrote a message of thanks following Barry's passing:

Thank you for your condolences and also mentioning the passing of Barry in the newsletter. it is very much appreciated.

Barry just loved his native plants and I am going to try and keep his garden going, it got away from us while Barry was not well. We had so much rain here, the weeds took over and the growth and flowers on the plants is very unusual. I do not seem to have lost much at all even though the plants were water logged for some time.
It will be interesting when we finally get some summer weather to see how the plants will fair after the big wet.

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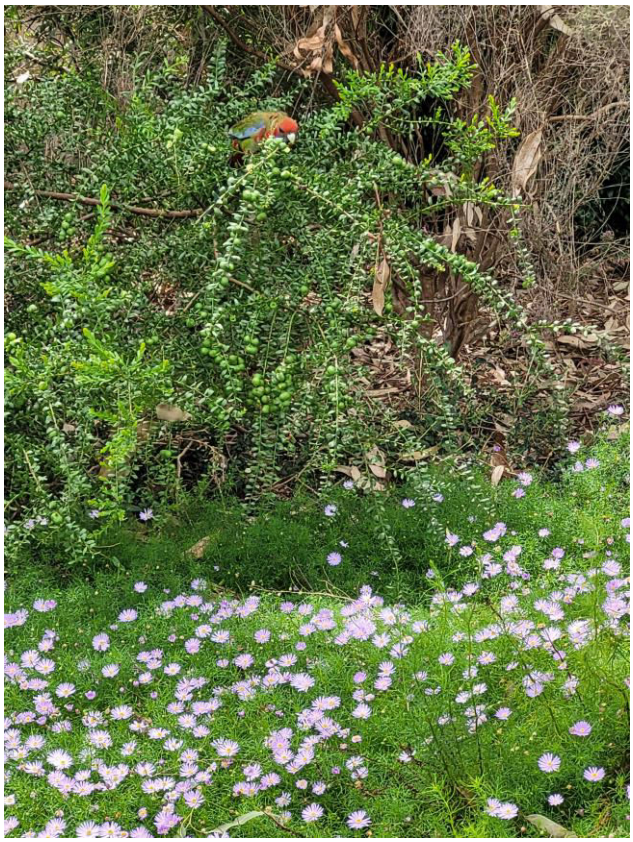
Nicky Zanen (Boronia, Vic) wrote (14 December 2022) as follows

"In November I noticed galls growing on my *Acacia acinacea*. This is still a small shrub and is very easily seen from my driveway. Then I had five visitors on this bush – a family of Crimson Rosellas. They were attacking the galls and having a super feed.

Nice to see the galls useful for somebody."



Crimson Rosella enjoying galls on *Acacia acinacea*

The left overs after the crimson rosellas had moved on.

Acacia Seeds and Beef Sausages

By Bill Aitchison

Dr Oladipupo Adiamo recently submitted his thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy at The University of Queensland, the subject of his research being *Nutritional and Functional Quality of Flour and Proteins from Australian Acacia seed*. For those interested, the thesis is available online and can be freely downloaded (see reference below). The following are a few notes extracted from his thesis.

Approximately 40 Australian *Acacia* species are deemed edible and considered rich sources of protein (18.25 to 35.5%). However, *Acacia* seed also possess protease inhibitors that require processing to reduce their effects (and therefore to improve the quality and functionality of flour and proteins from these protein-rich plants).

The species investigated in the research were *A. victoriae*, *A. coriacea* and *A. cowleana*. The project aimed to investigate the compositional, nutritional, and functional properties, and in vitro protein digestibility and intestinal iron absorption of flour and protein extracts from the three species.

Results showed that *A. coriacea* and *A. cowleana* seeds had higher amounts of proteins, iron, and trypsin inhibitor activity than *A. victoriae*. However, *A. coriacea* and *A. victoriae* demonstrated the highest water absorption and solubility indices. The effects of both species and geographical regions were investigated (species had higher significant effect than geographical regions).

The research also considered the optimum roasting time for seeds from the three species, having regard to changes in anti-nutrient activities, digestibility, intestinal iron absorption and functional properties. It was concluded that a roasting time of 7 minutes (180°C) was the most suitable roasting time for all the three *Acacia* species particularly *A. victoriae* and *A. coriacea*.

The effect of incorporating processed Acacia seed as an emulsifying agent on the quality attributes of beef sausages was also investigated. This showed that the Acacia seed flour and Acacia seed protein concentrates (particularly *A. victoriae* and *A. cowleana*) could be suitable ingredients for beef sausages and compare favourably with soy protein isolate commonly used as an emulsifying agent in making sausages. It was noted that soy is a food allergen included in the World Health Organization's list of the "big 8" allergens.

I asked Dr Adiamo as to his thoughts, in a commercial sense, as to how far away we may be from seeing a significant increase in the usage of Acacia seeds in food production in Australia? He responded to this question as follows:

"Acacia seeds, known for their high nutritional value, have not been fully utilized in commercial food production, despite their potential as an ingredient in a variety of food products. One reason for this is the unsustainable wild harvest of seeds, which has led to an insufficient supply to meet current and future market demands. Additionally, the limited knowledge of the quality and processing methods of different edible Acacia species has hindered their commercial use.

However, the Wattle Seeds Australia (WSA) Consortium in VIC, led by Peter Cunningham, has taken steps to address these challenges. The Consortium has expanded from wild harvest to horticultural production of about 15 fast-growing edible Acacia species to ensure consistent seed supply and quality. The current annual production of seed from cultivated orchards alone is approximately 25 tonnes and is expected to reach 60 tonnes in the next 2 years.

Recent studies, including my PhD research, have revealed significant diversity in the nutritional and sensory profiles of different Acacia species, indicating their potential for use in developing novel food products. Acacia species have also been found to possess high functional properties, such as water and oil binding abilities, which are essential for various food products such as meat and bakery products.

To promote the use of Acacia seeds in food production, more research is needed to explore the formulation of new food products with different Acacia species. Additionally, the inclusion of nutritive data of Acacia species in the Australian Nutritional Composition dataset could help guide food manufacturers in utilizing Acacia seeds for developing novel food products. Overall, the WSA Consortium's efforts and recent studies indicate that the potential for Acacia seeds in commercial food production is significant, and further exploration is needed to realize its full potential."

References:

https://espace.library.uq.edu.au/view/UQ:072925e

Adiamo, Oladipupo (2022). *Nutritional and Functional Quality of Flour and Proteins from Australian Acacia seed.* PhD Thesis, Queensland Alliance for Agriculture and Food Innovation, The University of Queensland. https://doi.org/10.14264/072925e

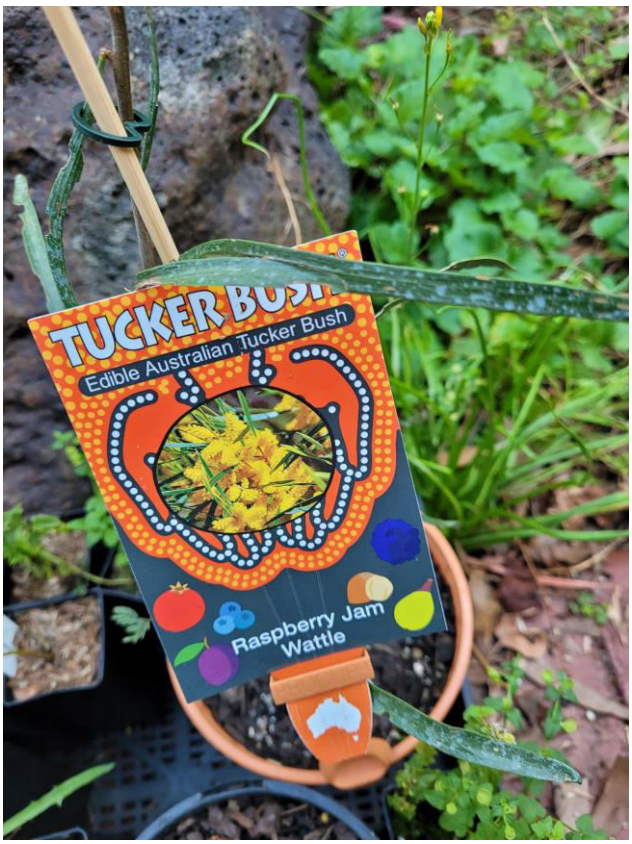
Acacia acuminata

by Nicky Zanen, Boronia, Vic

Recently I bought an *Acacia acuminata* plant from CERES in Brunswick. What caught my eye was the label

describing the plant as “Edible Australian Tucker Bush”, and the common name “Raspberry Jam Wattle”. I’m trying to increase my Bush Tucker collection so this plant needed to be added.

In the Encyclopaedia of Growing Australian Plants the *Acacia acuminata* is an upright, fast growing small tree, with a smooth to slightly rough grey trunk and rod like flower heads about 2.5 cm long. The species is adaptable to most relatively well drained soils and is tolerant of limestone soils. It prefers partial or full sun and grows best in warm areas although it is frost tolerant.



The timber is used extensively for fence posts and Aboriginals used this species in making various weapons. The wood is very heavy and durable, with an ornamental grain. When freshly cut, the fragrance of the wood is like that of raspberry jam.

According to Wikipedia, *Acacia acuminata* was first described by George Bentham in 1842 based on a collection made by James Drummond and forwarded to England. There are no currently recognised subspecies. The taxon previously called *Acacia acuminata subsp burkittii* is now considered to be a separate species and is called *Acacia burkittii*.

Three variations of *A acuminata* are currently recognised: *A acuminata* (small seed variant); *A acuminata* (narrow phyllode variant) and *A acuminata* (broad phyllode variant / typical variant).

The species name *acuminata* comes from the Latin *acuminatus*, which means pointed or elongated. This refers to the long tapering point at the end of each phyllode.

The Noongar peoples know the tree as Manjart, Munertor, Mungaitch or Mungat. The extensive use of the plant for wood, food and medicine by Nyungar peoples saw it regarded as a valuable resource. The abundance of seed was made into flour. The sap was collected and administered as medicine, either immediately or prepared and stored for later use.

The timber’s resistance to termites was exploited for fence posts when European agriculture was expanded into nearby areas, the durability of these is evident in fencing over 100 years old.

The uses of the wood came to include pipes and walking sticks, and the construction of staircases and furniture. The tree is regarded as a good source of firewood, the value as charcoal was recorded by Ferdinand von Muller in 1877. The charcoal was used for powering a gas producing mechanism attached to motor vehicles during petrol rationing in the mid twentieth century.

The nutritional composition of the numerous seeds, a shiny brown black colour, is 45% protein, 28% fats and 15% carbohydrates.

On the label it adds that as a quick growing nitrogen fixer, it’s an excellent companion / host plant for hemiparasitic species like Quandong and Sandalwood.

On the web Sandalwood Plantations advertise Powdered *Acacia acuminata* phyllodes for sale, described for leather tanning, and plantation grown and harvested with a protected native flora harvesting licence. The material comes dried, powdered and cryovac’d. It is harvested at peak sap flow for more tannins. One pack of 200 seeds is $17.00.

The plant is endemic in Western Australia, occurs throughout the south west of the state and is common in the Wheatbelt. It also extends into the semi-arid interior of WA. It is the main host used in Sandalwood plantations.

Seed pre-treatment is recommended and an example of hot water treatment given is to pour hot water close to boiling over the seeds for a few minutes, or scarify using a sharp knife to cut the hard outer layer of the seed.

There is a wealth of information on a fact sheet which includes details of where this acacia is found on website https://apps.lucidcentral.org/wattle/text/entities/acacia_acuminata.htm

I am intrigued to see how this tree performs for me in the south eastern suburbs of Melbourne once I’ve found a spot for it in my garden.

Matters relating to Weeds

by Bill Aitchison

1. Acacia auriculiformis

Acacia auriculiformis, the earleaf acacia, is native to northern Australia, on Cape York Peninsula and in the northern part of the Northern Territory (and also parts of eastern Indonesia and Papua New Guinea). It is a phyllodinous tree 15-20m tall, having alternate phyllodes and conspicuous pods. In its native geographic range it has a discontinuous distribution along the banks of rivers and perennial creeks, and grows mainly on sandy to moderate clayey soils. It has the ability to tolerate seasonal waterlogging and even grows well on infertile soils.

Acacia auriculiformis **Photo Geoff Lay**

***Acacia auriculiformis* Seed Pods** **Photo Geoff Lay**

***Acacia auriculiformis* flowers (at Annaburroo Lagoon, NT, May 2008)** **Photo Geoff Lay**

It has been widely distributed outside of its natural distribution, in both the southern and northern hemispheres, for its ornamental and horticultural value, but has become a serious weed in a number of regions, including south Florida, USA. It has been classified as a category 1 invasive weed in Florida, this category including invasive exotics that are altering native vegetation by displacing native species, changing community structure and ecological functions, or hybridizing with native species.

Muhammad Nawaz has recently carried out research at the University of Queensland investigating potential biological control agents for use against this species, and in 2022 submitted his thesis for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy.

His observations of the species across its Australian distribution indicated that the most destructive of the arthropod herbivores associated with it appeared to be *Macrobathra* leaf-tying caterpillars and the leaf-feeding beetle *Calomela intemerata*. It was observed that the herbivore fauna on *A. auriculiformis* were mostly different from that found on closely related acacia (even true for *Acacia holosericea* which is a close relative of *A. auriculiformis*). This implies that the insect herbivores of these acacias are generally species specific in their host associations.

In a recent communication with Dr Nawaz, he provided the following update on recent developments in the US:

"The leaf feeding beetle, *Calomela intemerata* (Chrysomelidae, Coleoptera) was imported by the US into Florida during 2019. Currently, the USDA is conducting the formal host range/specificity testing in their Quarantine facilities against a list of test plant species (about 50 plant species i.e., close relatives and the US natives). Preliminary results are quite promising. Once the trials are complete and after the climate matching studies, the agent would potentially be the first one to be released against the invasive *Acacia auriculiformis* in Florida subject to approval by the US authorities."

The following photos are reproduced with thanks to Dr Nawaz and to Christine Goosem, CSIRO Biosecurity, Brisbane.

References:

Nawaz, M., G. A. McCulloch, D. R. Brookes, R. Zonneveld, and G. H. Walter. 2021. Native range survey for host-specific *Acacia auriculiformis* biocontrol agents – a role for DNA barcoding. Biological Control158: 104594

Nawaz, M., D. R. Brookes, G. A. McCulloch, and G. H. Walter. 2022. Significant genetic structure in *Macrobathra* moths feeding on *Acacia auriculiformis*– implications for prioritising biological control agents. Biological Control 172: 104969 https://doi.org/10.1016/j.biocontrol.2022.104969

***Calomela intemerata* adult**

***Calomela intemerata* larva and damage**

***Calomela intemerata* pupa**

***Calomela intemerata* adult and eggs on phyllodes**

2. Acacia baileyana

I recently received a query from someone who lives in the Pyrenees, which is in Victoria north west of Melbourne. The query was whether the prostrate form of *Acacia baileyana* is considered as an environmental weed, in the same way that the upright form is. The enquirer noted that she would like to grow it but she lives next to natural bushland and does not want to spread seed. She had searched extensively to find an answer to the question but could not get a definitive answer.

I am aware that it is often claimed that prostrate forms are sterile and so don't pose a threat as environmental weeds eg https://www.gardenclinic.com.au/how-to-grow-article/plant-of-the-month-august-acacia-baileyana. However, I am also aware that this view is not shared by everyone. Interestingly, I recently visited Kuranga Native Nursery (a large native nursery in Melbourne) where they had a prostrate form of *Acacia baileyana* for sale. The nursery label attached to these plants noted that it grows to a height of 60cm and width 2-3m, is useful as a ground cover and is grown for its magnificent winter display. However, a warning on the label stated that it is "a native of NSW however may become invasive in other bushland areas". I also visited another local nursery (mainly exotics but some natives) and they had pots of *Acacia baileyana* 'Purpurea' for sale. The label attached to these plants stated that "plants should not be planted too close to bushlands as it can naturalise".

Seeds on *A. baileyana* 'Prostrate' **Photo Andrea Dennis**

I sought the opinions of a few people and received three responses. These are summarised below.

Andrea Dennis is horticultural specialist at Maranoa Botanic Gardens (in Balwyn, Victoria). She tells me that the only *A. baileyana* they have grown in the Gardens for probably the last 30 years have been the prostrate form and the purple form (they did have a number of the upright form there in the 1980s but not since then). Since she can remember, they have had no more than 2 *A. baileyana* seedlings come up in the Garden (unlike a number of other Acacia species that spread much more freely – the weedy species include *longifolia*, *floribunda*, the *prominens/fimbriata* group (except dwarf forms), *extensa*, and to a lesser extent *howittii* hybrids, *pycnantha* and *decurrens*. *A. saligna* and *A. elata* persist in mulch). Their *A. baileyana* 'Prostrate' plants do set some seed and it is possible that the 2 seedlings they have had could have come from the prostrate form (or they could be sleepers from years ago when there were a number of the upright form in the Garden). Andrea notes that the purple form has germinated true to type.

Bruce Schroder (an experienced grower of native plants) tells me that in his experience, the prostrate form is not weedy. He thinks the primary reason for this is because it sets so few seeds. He doesn't believe it is sterile but says that you really have to search to find any developing seed pods.

Rodger Elliot advises that he does not have any magic answer to the question but comments that it is a fascinating subject. His experience is that the so called prostrate form rarely sets seed but he thinks a major problem could be the transfer of its pollen by insects to other Acacia species such as the allied *Acacia dealbata* and therefore this could lead to hybrid progeny produced from *A. dealbata* and other species. He notes that this is just surmising on his part but he thinks this is very possible, Hence his stance is not to promote *Acacia baileyana* 'Prostrate' as a garden plant unless grown within the natural range of *A. baileyana*.

I am sure there will be Study Group members who have thoughts on this question. Please let me have any comments etc and I will include them in our next newsletter.

I passed on the above comments to the person who had made the enquiry, and she advises that she decided not to plant the *A. baileyana*. As a substitute she planted 5 *Acacia howittii* prostrate forms and will see how they go in the wind and clay (even though she believes *A. baileyana* 'Prostrate' is much nicer).

3. Acacia longifolia

Acacia longifolia is well known as one of the most problematic of the weedy Acacia species. It is the subject of some recently published research which looked at its invasion history in various overseas countries. By studying the genetics of both Australian native populations and overseas invasive populations, the aim of the research was to learn more of the introduction history in its overseas populations.

This was done by sampling 272 *A. longifolia* individuals – 126 from different invasive ranges and 146 from the native range – from 41 populations.

The potential benefit of this type of analysis is that it may help when planning management and control efforts, such as biological control, in some invaded regions.

The study showed that tracing the introduction history of *A. longifolia* is some countries is difficult. The analysis identified Tasmania as being the likely source of invasive populations in Brazil and Uruguay. However, in Portugal they were unable to identify the native source of introduction and found evidence of multiple introductions. Similarly they were not able to draw any conclusions in relation to Spain (likely due to the small number of populations and individuals sampled in this country) nor in relation to South Africa (probably because of its complicated introduction history and multiple introductions).

An overall conclusion was that the success of existing biocontrol agents such as *Trichilogaster acaciaelongifoliae* in places such as South Africa is likely to be replicated in other invaded regions. "Piggy-backing" on the biocontrol programs of countries such as South Africa may substantially shorten the amount of time needed to implement programs in other parts of the world, as was the case for the introduction of *T. acaciaelongifoliae* into Portugal.

Reference:
Vicente S, Trindade H, Máguas C, Le Roux JJ (2023) Genetic analyses reveal a complex introduction history of the globally invasive tree *Acacia longifolia*. NeoBiota 82: 89–117. https://doi.org/10.3897/neobiota.82.87455

Time for Exams

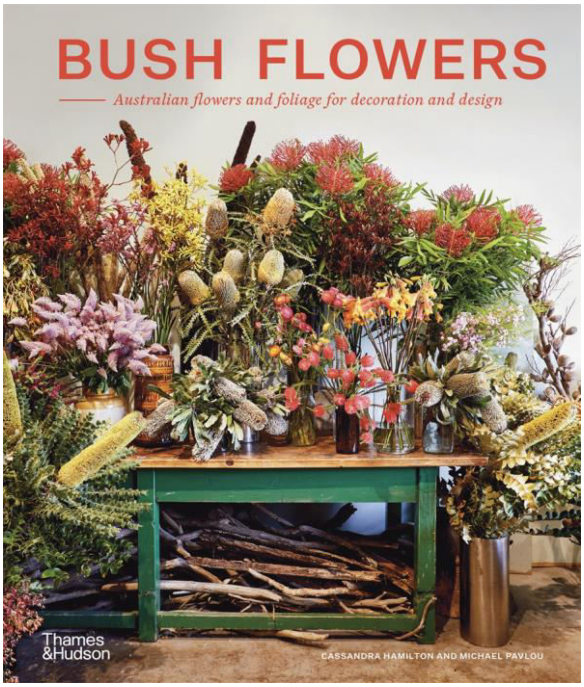
Perhaps a first for our Study Group, our Study Group newsletter featured in a question in last year's VCE Environmental Science Exam Paper. The question related to the Graveside Gorge wattle (*Acacia equisetifolia*) which was referred to in our Newsletter No. 125 (June 2014).

For anyone interested, the examination paper is available on the website of the Victorian Curriculum and Assessment Authority. The link is https://www.vcaa.vic.edu.au/assessment/vce-assessment/past-examinations/Pages/Environmental-Science.aspx

Acacias in floristry

Cassandra Hamilton and Michael Pavlov are florists and growers of Australian plants. They have written a book, Bush Flowers, which celebrates the beauty of Australian

flora and provides advice on how to bring Australian native plants into your home.



The first part of the book covers subjects such as where to source flowers, flower arrangement and design and drying of flowers. The second section of the book provides profiles of about 50 plants with notes on growing, cutting, conditioning, arranging and drying, with florists' insights on what makes them so special.

Acacias feature quite significantly with about 8 species included within the plant profiles section.

Some of the items that I noted relating to Acacias were:

- Some wattles are short lasting while others dry well. They usually have 4 to 7 days vase life.
- Wattle looks great with silvery gum foliage.
- *Acacia podalyriifolia* has the advantage that its flowers don't shed – a great application for this would be in a beautiful dry wreath.
- The striking foliage of *Acacia aphylla* (Reindeer Bush) provides a sculptural element to an arrangement. It is only recently that this species has started being picked for its flowers (but the flowers do have a short vase life.
- To fully appreciate the foliage of *Acacia merinthophora* (Zig-zag Wattle), the most impactful way of displaying a stem is in a bud vase on its own, or else keep it simple with just two feature stems.
- The red flowering *Acacia. leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze' has a short vase life of only 3 to 5 days – it helps to recut the stems daily and keep cool. Unfortunately, it is incorrectly stated that this red flowering form of *Acacia leprosa* is found in the Dandenong Ranges and surrounds in Victoria and has also been found scattered through NSW and Queensland. This of course is incorrect as there was only ever one plant found in the hills to the east of Melbourne (which is no longer there so the red form is now extinct in the wild).

A couple of final observations relating to the book. The book features many colour photographs of the plants and floral arrangements, and the quality of the photographs is outstanding. And finally, I am sure that many of us have come across situations where some South African species are wrongly represented as being Australian natives. At the very beginning of this book it is noted that Leucadendrons and Proteas are often labelled "native" in Australia whereas they are South African – and are not included in this book.

Bush Flowers – Australian flowers and foliage for decoration and design
By Cassandra Hamilton and Michael Pavlov
Published by Thames and Hudson 2023

Wattles in Flower

by Bill Aitchison

A topic that seems to get raised quite frequently relates to the idea of having a garden that includes at least one wattle in flower every month of the year – and I was asked this question by someone just recently.

This prompted me to have a check in my own garden, and also nearby Maranoa Botanic Gardens, to see what wattles were currently in flower – at the end of February/early March, which is not a peak flowering time.

Wattles in flower at Maranoa Botanic Gardens (MBG) included:

Acacia angusta – In his book Plants of Central Queensland, Eric Anderson describes this as a little known species with a slender growth habit, 3-6m tall, that flowers June to July, that could be useful in cultivation. The plant at MBG was planted in 1989, is now quite an old tree, not a slender tree 3-6m high, but with quite a large sprawling trunk and branches, about 8m high and a spread of 10m.

***Acacia angusta* at MBG, photographed 2 March 2023**

In past seasons, this particular plant's main flowering period has been April, so this year's flowering that started in February seems early (maybe Melbourne's significant rainfall last year could have had an impact on flowering times).

Nearby to the 1989 *A. angusta*, there is another much younger one, that came up naturally as a seedling. This plant, that also started flowering in February, very much fits the definition of a slender plant, about 6m tall and 3m wide.

At MBG they call it the Highland Wattle and Eric refers to it in his book as Narrow-leaved wattle.

Acacia aestivalis – The species name *aestivalis* means "usually flowering in summer" – so it is probably not unexpected that this would be in flower in late summer/early autumn. The plant at MBG was planted in 2016, it is a bushy shrub about 2m x 2m. The plant label at MBG notes that in WA where it come from it "often forms dense stands in disturbed areas".

***Acacia aestivalis* at MBG, photographed 14 March 2023**

Acacia jibberdingensis – A long flowering species that came into flower at MBG in March – its deep yellow flowers are very attractive and make it an excellent ornamental garden plant.

***Acacia jibberdingensis* at MBG, photographed 14 March 2023**

Acacia oshanesii – This comes from northern NSW and southeast Queensland where it usually grows along stream banks. It is reported there as flowering throughout the year. Whilst it could be an option if you want a wattle to flower in February/March (as it does at MBG), it may grow too large for many home gardens – the plant at MBG is now about 10m tall. It would also need extra water, especially during dry periods (at MBG they have it growing in the rainforest section of the garden).

Acacia parramattensis – Another NSW species, where it flowers chiefly November – February. At MBG it was still in flower in March, the plant is about 6m x 3m but rather stunted in appearance, perhaps because of a lack of water.

Acacia phlebopetala – this is a wattle that perhaps could be described as lovely to look at but not so lovely to touch. At MBG it is a low growing shrub, about 0.6m high and a spread of about 2m. It has bright green phyllodes and creamy white globular flower heads, giving it an attractive appearance at this time of year. But the phyllodes are very pungent. In our Newsletter No. 128, Dan Murphy reported that he had removed his *A. phlebopetala* from his garden because of the sharply pungent phyllodes.

***Acacia phlebopetala* at MBG, photographed 2 March 2023**

***Acacia trinervata* at MBG, photographed 2 March 2023**

Acacia trinervata – The plant at MBG was planted in 2017, having been propagated from seed obtained from

Nindethana. It is now about 5m high and 2.5m wide. It is a species that is reported as flowering throughout the year where it naturally occurs in western Sydney and the adjacent lower Blue Mountains. Its name refers to its three-veined phyllodes which are also pungent. It has been flowering well at MBG during February and March.

Two more species at MBG flowering in March were *Acacia loroloba* (a few flowers) and *Acacia elata* (this has weedy tendencies, there are 2 plants at MBG and the Gardens staff carefully monitor and remove any seedlings that appear).

Wattles in flower in Sue and my garden in February/March included:

Acacia assimilis ssp *atroviridis* – We have 2 of these in the garden, growing adjacent to each other. One of these has been flowering now for several weeks, the other has not flowered. It is a species that is reported as flowering sporadically throughout the year.

Acacia deanei ssp *paucijuga* – This has quite pale cream coloured flowers but it does flower for long periods and it has attractive bipinnate foliage. Our plant is about 3m tall.

Acacia subulata – I recall that Ros and Ben Walcott (Canberra, ACT) have previously written in our newsletter about the many attributes of this wattle, one of which is its all year flowering (in addition to its fragrance, delightful ferny foliage, decorative seed pods and fast growth). We were probably encouraged by Ros and Ben's enthusiasm to plant this in our garden, we planted it near the front entrance to our property and it has rewarded us, flowering for many months of the year.

Seed Bank

Although we do purchase some seed from commercial sources, we also rely upon donations of seed. If you are able to help with any seed donations they would be very welcome (we would ask you to post any donations to Bill Aitchison, who will forward them on to our Seed Bank Curator, Victoria Tanner). It also helps enormously if you are able to clean, sort and label the seed correctly. Also, we would like to have provenance information for all seed in the seed bank – so if you donate any seed, could you also provide any information you have in relation to provenance.

Thank you to Jennie Epstein, Helen van Riet, Merele Webb and Joe Wilson for recent donations of seed. The most recent seed list that was published in the newsletter was in Newsletter No. 147 (https://anpsa.org.au/wp-content/uploads/acacia147.pdf).

I will publish any updated lists as I receive them from the Seed Bank Curator.

The procedure for requesting seed from the Seed Bank is as follows. Study Group members are entitled to lodge up to 3 orders per member per year, with 10 packets maximum in each order (negotiable). There is a charge of $4 in relation to each order, to cover the cost of a padded post bag and postage. The $4 may be paid in stamps or by direct credit to our Group's bank account. Requests for seed may be lodged in either of the following ways:

1. By email to our Study Group email address, acaciastudygroup@gmail.com. If you make a request by email, you will also need to make the necessary payment by one of the above methods. If you are paying by stamps, these should be mailed to Bill Aitchison, 13 Conos Court, Donvale, Vic 3111

2. By mail (enclosing stamps if required). These requests should be posted to Bill Aitchison (address as in the previous paragraph). Bill will then advise Victoria of the request.

Study Group Membership

Acacia Study Group annual membership is as follows:

$7 (newsletter sent by email)
$10 (hardcopy of newsletter posted in Australia – existing members only)

Subscriptions may be sent to:
Bill Aitchison, 13 Conos Court, Donvale, Victoria 3111

Subscriptions may also be paid directly to our Account at the Bendigo Bank. Account details are:
Account Name: ASGAP Acacia Study Group
BSB: 633-000
Account Number: 130786973

If you pay directly to the Bank Account, please advise us by email (acaciastudygroup@gmail.com).