

Dear Members,

During the last few months northern Tasmania has received more rain than most parts of Australia. In this we have been fortunate, but the rain plus accompanying strong winds on some occasions has affected the quality and length of flowering of some of the plants, especially the Acacias. As well, some of the Acacias have not flowered as prolifically as usual and we put this down to an exceptionally dry season when the buds were forming. Always there seems to be some factor at work changing what we consider to be normal.

Welcome to new members who have joined the group since July:-

Col Scott, 231 Cooriengah Htgs. Rd., Engadine, N.S.W. 2233
Lyn Stewart, Avon, S.A. 5501
Philip Moore, 55 Pritchard St., Annandale, N.S.W. 2038
Mrs. Margaret Wilson, 5 Christina Av., Sale, Vic. 3850
Robert, I. Jones, 59 Boronga Av., West Pymble, N.S.W. 2073
Gary Hearnese, 137 Dorset Rd., Croydon, Vic. 3136

A new address for Mrs. R. White. It is now Lot 6, O'brien, RMB 298, Gidgeganup, W.A. 6555

Thank you for your subscriptions. All subscriptions are due now, with the exception of those who have paid in advance and those who have joined us in the last few months. If your sub. is due, a large red cross will appear on the top of your newsletter, so there will be no doubt about the matter.

At present the list of financial members totals 76. Since July 1979 we have sent out 715 packets of seeds.

FINANCIAL REPORT to 31st October 1980

Balance carried forward	35.34	
Subs. and donations	145.06	
Interest	<u>4.83</u>	185.23

EXPENSES

Stationery	11.26	
Stamp Duty	3.90	
Postage	67.18	
Purchase of seed	<u>28.25</u>	110.59

		74.64
Subs. in advance		<u>14.00</u>
		<u>\$88.64</u>

This total does not include any of the November newsletter costs of printing, paper and postage.

I would like to acknowledge receipt of exchange newsletters from Victorian Region S.G.A.P., the Hakea, Eucalypt and Melaleuca study groups. It is always interesting to read what the other groups are doing and how they tackle common problems.

ADDITIONS TO OUR BOOK LIST:

"GROW WHAT WHERE" by the Australain Plant Study Group has been revised, enlarged and reprinted in a hard back cover edition and now features colour and black and white plates and line drawings as well as the invaluable lists of the smaller book. It is published by Nelsons. \$14.95

MEMBERS' NOTES:

John Lee wrote of a semi-automatic watering method outlined in J. Wrigley's "Australian Native Plants" of an inverted bottle of water over a tray of sand. To quote from John's letter - "the member who demonstrated it puts 1 or 2 seeds in small propagation tubes and gets good results. The system would overcome the problem of having a punnet of seedling Acacias all of different heights and germinating at different times". You may remember that in an earlier newsletter one of our members found the different germination times quite a nuisance.

Col Scott has attempted a wide range of propagation from cuttings with reasonable success, using a simple box covered with glass, putting his cuttings into river sand in yoghurt cups. He is now trying the capillary method for germinating seeds, also with reasonable success. Here he puts yoghurt cups filled with sandy soil into blue metal filled icecream buckets half filled with water.

A new member, Philip Moore, has opened up a new aspect of Acacia growing to me. Apart from being interested in growing Acacias as a home gardener, he is also interested in their use in the perfume industry. To quote from his letter - "A. dealbata and A. floribunda were imported to France in 1840 and are grown extensively around Canne. Oil of mimosa is extracted from the flowers by petroleum extraction and is used as a base or fixative for perfume".

It puzzles him that this has not been undertaken in Australia, and would be very interested to hear of anyone working in this field no matter in how small a way.

He goes on to mention A. farnesiana which is native to five continents and from which Oil of Cassia is extracted and used as a valued perfume fixative and apparently sells for \$1500 kg in its purest state. He asked if a study of this species climatic and cultural requirements has ever been undertaken.

I would appreciate hearing from any member who can shed some light on this interesting side of Acacia growing. I have written to several of the Herbariums for an answer to these questions.

Both Alan Gibb and Ern Currie are waxing almost poetical in their praise of A. denticulosa. Alan's plant has flowered for the first time. ~~Ern has a shrub which is 4 years old, 3m x 1.5 m,~~ which flowered magnificently with a mass of golden spikes. Ern was wondering about pruning it, as it is getting rather leggy. I am afraid I have had no experience with this one and do not know if it will stand pruning. Please, can anyone help with advice? Dr. Ross Macdonald has had this Acacia flowering this year, as well.

Extracted from Queensland Region Newsletter August 1980:

ACACIA LEPTOLOBA - *An Exceptional Northern Wattle*

This species of wattle was introduced from the Irvinebank region of North Queensland to the native gardeners of Townsville about three years ago. By virtue of its admirable qualities, it was voted "Plant of the Year, 1979" by the Townsville Branch of S.G.A.P.

Some of these qualities are: its magnificent display of large, almost white pom-pom type flowers occurring at up to 4-5 times throughout the year; its very quick growth rate (will often flower within its first year); and its superb blue-green coloured phyllodes tipped with a purple-burgundy colour. It reaches 3-4 m in a couple of years and withstands both light and heavy pruning.

This plant is particularly good for Townsville growers because of its ability to grow in infertile clay soils. It is extremely easy to grow from scarified seed and will always remain a hardy plant. This small tree shows great potential for southern regions also - in fact, a highly recommended acacia for everyone.

It would be interesting to know how versatile this acacia is and how far south it will grow and flower. Perhaps Queensland members could endeavour to locate seed of this one for the seed bank.

REPORTS ON ACACIA GROWTH

The time has come again to request a report on progress of plants. The usual form is enclosed and I would appreciate receiving a completed list from all active members - please include those which have failed.

Some members reported earlier in the year and it is not necessary for them to do so again so soon. One report a year is sufficient.

For new members, if you have not kept records previously, I would like to receive a list of the Acacias you are growing at present and ask that any new plants which are put into the garden are recorded in keeping with the enclosed form and reported on after they are 12 months old.

If one record sheet is insufficient please follow the headings on a plain piece of paper. -----

I have concluded with this poem which Mr. Daniels wrote when he was a boy at boarding school -

THE GOLDEN WATTLE

Thy beauty far outshines the pale twilight,
Your value mocks the clearest Dresden dish,
Or puts to shame the colours of the reef
Of coral bright seen by refracted light
Or tints of rare and multi-coloured fish.
Rare autumn shades of beech or olive leaf
Have not the splendour you alone possess
When in the grandeur of September's dress.
For are you not Australia's wattle flower,
The finest and the truest sprig of gold
That ever decked a leafy branch or bower
The grandest sight one ever could behold.
You are a symbol of this land of wealth,
The emblem of our stately Commonwealth.

L.J. Daniels.

Thank you.

M.H. Simmons