

Dear Members,

Acacias in flower in our garden are few and far between at the moment. A. rupicola is flowering well, a few flowers linger on A. dictyoneura, on one plant of A. acinacea and on A. willdenowiana. It seems that the very dry year we have experienced has affected the length of flowering of some species.

I would like to thank those who responded to the call for information for the 'Survey of Threatened Plant Species in Cultivation' and sent details in to Lyn Meredith.

NEW MEMBERS: Welcome to two new members:

Mrs. Win Bennett, 22 Echuca Rd., Greensborough 3088

Mr. Tom Chalkley, 12-14 Harley St. Bendigo 3550.

Should you live in their vicinity, perhaps you could get in touch with them. I am sure there would be mutual benefits and interests.

NEW ADDRESS: John Wieck, 90 Murdoch Drive, Singleton WA 6211.

SEED BANK: The seed bank department was rather slow to respond to requests during the winter months due to my work load; however, my husband, John, came to the rescue on several occasions to bring things up to date. I would like to apologise for the delays; all should be well now that the deadline has come and gone.

Extracts from ACIAR Forestry Newsletter September 1987 - A 'Biological Nitrogen Fixation' Symposium was held in Indonesia in August with more than 100 scientists taking part and fifty papers being presented.

I noted in particular that in one paper dealing with tree species introduced into Thailand that several northern Acacia species (A. auriculiformis and A. mangium) were identified as having potential for wider planting and trial in Asia where renewal of timber reserves and forests is an urgent matter.

Several less well-known species included in the trials were A. crassicarpa, A. difficilis and A. leptocarpa. Data was presented on the many uses to which these trees may be put, e.g. as stock fodder, firewood, pulping, biomass production and coppicing.

The importance of the provenance of the seed selected was discussed. Much of the more successful seed chosen for these trials was collected from Papua New Guinea and northern Australian locations. Over a period of three years seeds of A. aulacocarpa, crassicarpa, leptocarpa, cincinnata and new provenances of A. auriculiformis were distributed and now form a large part of the current trials.

Some of these trials, which are being conducted in several areas

of Sabah, Thailand and China, are giving clear indications that some of them will be effective substitutes for the better known and widely used A. mangium. Although the results vary, most are demonstrating the importance of selecting suitable provenances for specific areas. The trials will continue for some years yet.

MEMBERS NOTES

This year Fred Bienvenu of Myrtleford, Vic. has experienced larger losses than normal to borer attack. Among the victims were A. ausfeldii, 'Buchan Blue', iteaphylla, macradenia, muelleriana, obliquinervia, oxycedrus, podalyriifolia, pravissima, sp. affin. boormanii and retinodes. Abnormal conditions surely must have encouraged a population explosion of the borers, but what a huge number of plants to lose!

Leon Steinhardt of Laidley in Qld. commented on the surge of new growth on the Acacias when good rains fell after a long 8 month drought, proving the point that as a group the acacias are pretty resilient.

Trevor Blake of Melbourne has sent an interesting note on A. peuce. He says - 'There are supposedly 3 occurrences - north of Birdsville and one on the western side of the Simpson (nearest settlement Andado Station) and the Himalayas?' He asks if I can throw any light on the last recording. I know nothing of this location unless it is the name of some outback station. Anyone know anything about this one?

Trevor goes on to say that they 'came across several posts that had been used around Andado Station which had been cut 80 odd years ago. The timber is black and polishes magnificently and is exceptionally hard. It is not attacked by termites or subject to rot. The growth rings are extremely close together and photo's taken in the 20's show little difference from those taken recently which indicate extreme age for the species. Part of the western outcrop is fenced off so at least some will have cattle away from them.'

Tony Bean, leader of the Eucalytus Study Group is delighted - he has found a new Acacia - his very first! It is always good news when a new plant is reported. This one is a shrub with affinities to A. conferta. It has bright yellow ball flowers and grows on Roger's Peak, north-east of Capella Qld.

PLANTING TREES FOR MORE NATURAL EFFECT

Extracted (with his permission) from an article written by Neil Parker from Private Forestry Division of Tas. Forestry Commission.


With the need and enthusiasm today for planting more trees on farms, small properties, roadsides and parks etc. I found this article of particular interest.

Amenity forestry - the establishment and management of forests for their values other than for timber will assume greater importance and we will see more of this type of planting.

In this land of long wire fences and usually rectangular land

division one of the most difficult problems is that of opening the minds of planters to the idea that trees and shrubs do not necessarily look their best, grow their best or are most useful when planted in straight lines and geometric patterns. Natural, informal plantings are generally more fitting and useful, especially in the rural scene.

Practical ways to achieve a satisfying result:

1. Trees should not be planted in straight lines, except for specific purposes.
 2. Straight lines are inappropriate to the free and informal character of most native trees, shrubs, the Australian landscape and lifestyle.
 3. Planting trees in curved lines is often a practical alternative where it is necessary to prepare the ground by ripping or ridge ploughing or after planting, to maintain it by cultivation or slashing.
 4. Contour planting is a natural extension of 3. Lines up and down the slope, in this context, are unforgiveable.
 5. If straight lines are absolutely unavoidable for maintenance reasons, below are several methods of making the lines less obtrusive.
 6. Set up the rows across the general line of sight. Break them, if possible angle the sections to close the alleys vertically. Better still, lay out a second set of rows in the opposite direction from the first and crossing a different line of sight. A herring-bone arrangement with access track between the two may be useful for maintenance.
 7. Draw the rows as close together as possible, consistent with allowing access of machinery and plant the trees and shrubs farther apart in rows; the example below shows the different effects.
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8. Don't measure the distance between trees and shrubs in the row and don't sight them in precisely; pacing is good enough and a slightly staggered row more acceptable.
 9. Similarly NEVER line up plants across the rows - make every effort to avoid it.
 10. Vary distance between trees in the rows by 'give and take' spacing: 1/2 metre more or less, here and there.
 11. Mix different types of trees and shrubs throughout the planting or, if possible, have a mixture of trees in the background and mixed shrubs in foreground; but with native trees and shrubs, random arrangements please - NOT regular patterns.

12. A simple development of the 'give and take' method, when planting a mixture of trees and shrubs, where two trees come in sequence, the spacing could be, say, 4 paces; the distance between tree and shrub 3 paces and two consecutive shrubs, 2 paces. This technique is well suited to windbreaks of natives of 2 or 3 rows or more.

14th BIENNIAL CONFERENCE & SEMINAR 25-22 JANUARY.

John and I are planning to go to the above. As there will be a meeting of Study Group leaders during the week, I would be pleased to hear if anyone has any matter which they would like discussed.

There is to be a display illustrating the work of the study groups on the evening of Wednesday 20 January. We plan to take some of the group's slides with us, together with some colour prints and maybe some pressed specimens which we have on hand.

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