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ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS
ACACIA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER NO 53
MARCH 1988

Dear Members,

Summer in Tasmania has been a long dry one with the most beautiful sunny weather - delightful! However the gardens have taken some punishment unless one is prepared or is able to water the plants regularly. We only do so when the situation has become desperate, which means that we have lost a number of plants this summer. Some of them were acacias.

WELCOME to new members and those who have renewed their subscriptions.
Mrs Jan Stiller, MS24, Gladstone, Qld 4680
Ms Val Maher, 2 Langley Rd. Cranbourne South Vic 3977
Mrs Helen Bizzai, Box 368, PO Gawler SA 5118
Mrs Doris Gunn, 37 Lochard Drive, Ocean Grove, Vic. 3216
Dr Max McDowall, 10 Russell St.Bulleen Vic 3105

Please correct Mrs. Win Bennet's address on your members list, it should read 22 Echuca Rd. Greensborough 3088

Thank you for subscriptions and donations received since November 1987. I would like to acknowledge receipt of newsletters from Eucalyptus, Dodonaea, Birds and Native Plants and Daisy study groups and regional newsletters from Tasmania, Victoria and Queensland only; newsletters from the other groups would be appreciated.

SEED LIST

Additions	Deletions
A. calantha	A. echinula
A. melliodora	A. cretata
A. menzelii	A. julifera
A. quornensis	A. pilosa

We would appreciate receiving seed, preferably collected in the bush, of any of the foregoing species, together with any that are not already on the seed list. Please indicate whether bush or garden collected. Thank you.

MEMBERS NOTES

Inez Armitage wrote to tell us that she has had varied success with the plants trialled on her 5 acres at Kempsey. Many acacias have been tried and failed, some in the pot stage, however there are about 30 different species, many of which are local to the area, that are doing reasonably well. Inez did comment that it was extraordinary how badly some of the local species do in her garden. On the other hand, A. floribunda, binervata and leiocalyx are magnificent specimens. She has had successful flowerings from A. semilunata, A. craspedocarpa (8 years old), A. chrysotricha hybrid (continues to be best of all, 10 x 10m with foliage to ground level), binervia, muelleriana and irrorata.

Inez is surprised to find how many acacias sucker, e.g. A. muelleriana, leiocalyx, irrorata, all the decurrens hybrids and binervata. (Can others add more species to this list? Please let me know if you can).

Thomas Ross from West Germany tells of a property bought by a friend on the Mediterranean coast. His job will be to rejuvenate the garden. He thinks it will probably become the first 'Australian' garden in that area, as 90% of the plants he will add will be Australian. Among them wattles will be the most prominent.

The climate is almost frost free with a pronounced dry season in summer. Winters will be a little cooler than Melbourne's (like ours in T&S perhaps??)

We have sent some seed bank seed for Thomas to grow for this very interesting project and look forward to hearing more about it as it progresses.

Arnold Sandell of Qld. has sent in a report on the Acacias he has growing at Tamborine Village. He has 74 different species growing consisting of 137 plants which is a fine effort. He, too, finds that A. muelleriana suckers.

Bruce Clark of Panmure Vic. lost many of his seedlings during an earlier hot spell, mainly because of lack of overhead shelter which he has now constructed. I guess we all learn the hard way that it is essential to give young plants some protection.

Val Maher of Cranbourne South, Vic. wrote in January of the flowering and growth of her acacias. Last season A. elata, howittii, pravissima, leprosa, cardiophylla, schinoides all attained tree size. She mentioned that A. merinthophora (WA) has grown to 60 cm. She noted that doves and pigeons are frequent visitors to the garden feeding on fallen seed and honeyeaters are constantly searching through foliage for insects.

Helen Bizzai has moved house and part of the garden to Gawler. She has spent a lot of time propagating favourite plants before the move, especially SA wattles. It will be interesting to hear how the new garden progresses.

CUTTINGS

Max McDowall reported that he has grown the following from cuttings: A. mucronata, A. sedifolia, A. aspera, A. myrtifolia, A.congesta.

What other species have you struck from cuttings recently? I can add A. pilosa, A. andrewsii, A. nigripilosa type.

MEETING OF STUDY GROUP LEADERS AT 1988 CANBERRA CONFERENCE

Seven leaders or representatives were present at the meeting which was chaired by Barbara Daly, our co-ordinator. There were quite a number of observers present as well.

All leaders gave a short report on their activities which mainly related to growing plants and trialling them for suitability as horticultural subjects. The need was stressed to get them into gardens so that the best forms could be selected and that information could be made available regarding their performance under different climatic conditions.

Registering of good forms and ways of releasing these to nurseries was discussed at length. It is a complicated business when one comes down to who benefits from the work involved. Some mention was made of slide collections to be loaned to other groups and speakers.

FINANCE was discussed at length; it seems that some groups have greater need than others, e.g. some with living collections to maintain.

There were some major issues regarding funding, accountability, the role and status of study groups which remained unresolved and it was decided that a committee be set up to investigate all these matters under the umbrella of ASGAP. It was suggested that all regions, groups and individual members be canvassed for their opinions and ideas to obtain the widest possible input before final guidelines are drawn up.

'AUSTRALIAN PLANTS'

The conference recommended that, if possible, each member society and each study group be responsible for compiling articles and supplying photographs (colour slides) for one 'Australian Plants' issue every three years.

With regard to our group's effort I would like to hear from any member who has a suggestion to make regarding the subject matter of these articles. I have a few ideas but I would appreciate hearing from members as I feel it should be a group production.

I would love to receive an illustrated article on any aspect of growing acacias if anyone is able to do pen and line drawings to illustrate their article. I look forward to hearing from you.

RE-VEGETATION & THE ROLE OF SEED ORCHARDS - adapted from "Seeds of the Future" by Joanna Seabrook who spoke on the subject at the Canberra Seminar.

Much discussion and thought is being given to this subject today as the revegetation of many areas in Australia is becoming more urgent. Tree and shrub decline on properties and the gradual disappearance of vegetated roadsides is of great concern to many people. The remaining roadside corridors often harbour much of the remaining flora and fauna especially in W.A. and provide a thoroughfare for birds, animals and valuable insects. Once this is gone so are they.

Seed orchards are one way of supplying the necessary quantity of seed required to revegetate large areas, also it is a method of ensuring that seed of endangered species is available to growers.

It has been established that it is important for seed orchards to be based on seeds of plants that grow locally as they have adapted to local conditions and when grown will form a natural habitat for local birds, animals and insects. Acacias are usually a prominent component of most habitats and are important as through their nitrogen fixing abilities they improve the fertility of the soil, usually grow quickly, flower and set seed early.

The seed orchard that Joanna spoke about was at Mundaring in W.A. where the local shire provided 1/8 hectare of land which was a disused gravel pit and offered machinery for preparing the ground. Some members of the Eastern Hills Branch of WA Wildflower Society provided the seed of 18 species of local shrubs which included Acacias and these were sown after the first winter rains. All plants germinated readily, but pea plants were destroyed by rabbits. Within 2 years of planting most of the Acacias were producing seed.

Seed was given to the local shire to re-vegetate areas such as gravel pits, roadsides and town areas. Seed which was mixed with superphosphate and broadcast with a superspreader onto ripped ground has resulted in outstanding successes.

Seed orchards cost little to establish, need minimum maintenance after establishment and provide a plentiful supply of seed.

Governments can afford to do less and less it seems, so it is up to each of us to do what we can to revegetate areas or help others to do so before our unique seed source in the bush or on roadside verges and other areas is cleared away for ever.

Using another method to ensure the survival of rare or endangered plants, the Victorian Endangered Plants Officer in the December 1987 newsletter mentioned that she was negotiating for the use of some land in Stawell to establish a reserve for endangered species. She also mentioned that "we should get rare plants propagated so that they are not lost." She feels that "if we can keep plants going in our gardens or reserves, it should be possible to re-introduce them into the wild in more favourable times."

Are there rare or endangered acacias in your area? Is there anything practical that you can do to see that they are propagated ? If you cannot grow them yourself can you supply seeds or cuttings to someone who can ? Please let me know where I can help you to follow this through.

The following list is taken from 'Rare or Threatened Aust. Plants' by J. Leigh & others 1981. I think it has been revised but this will serve as a guide.

Acacia aciphylla
Acacia adunca
Acacia albiziodes
Acacia amblyphylla
Acacia ammophila
Acacia anomala
Acacia aphylla
Acacia araneosa
Acacia argutifolia
Acacia ausfeldii
Acacia axillaris
Acacia barattensis
Acacia barbinervis
Acacia basedowii
Acacia bynoeana
Acacia calantha
Acacia campylophylla
Acacia carnei
Acacia chrysotricha
Acacia cluniea-rossiae
Acacia cochlocarpa
Acacia confluens
Acacia constablei
Acacia covenyi
Acacia crassuloides
Acacia crombei
Acacia curranii
Acacia deflexa
Acacia dempsteri
Acacia denticulosa
Acacia depressa
Acacia deuteroneura
Acacia dodonaeifolia
Acacia dura
Acacia enterocarpa
Acacia flabellifolia
Acacia flagelliformis
Acacia flockeri
Acacia flocktoniae
Acacia floydii
Acacia forsythii
Acacia gillii
Acacia gittinsii
Acacia glandulicarpa
Acacia glaucoptera
Acacia gnidium
Acacia gracilifolia
Acacia grandifolia
Acacia grisea
Acacia guymeri
Acacia helicophylla
Acacia hockenysii
Acacia holotricha
Acacia horridula
Acacia howittii
Acacia hylonoma
Acacia imbricata
Acacia incrassata
Acacia ingramii
Acacia inopa
Acacia islana
Acacia iteaphylla
Acacia kydrensis
Acacia lanuginosa
Acacia latisepala
Acacia lucasii
Acacia megacephala
Acacia meisneri
Acacia menzelii
Acacia merrickae
Acacia microneura
Acacia nigricans
Acacia oldfieldii
Acacia oxyclada
Acacia pachypoda
Acacia pataczekii
Acacia peuce
Acacia phasmoides
Acacia phlebophylla
Acacia pickardii
Acacia pinguifolia
Acacia plicata
Acacia prismifolia
Acacia pritzeliana
Acacia pubescens
Acacia pubiosta
Acacia purpureipetala
Acacia quornensis
Acacia ramiflora
Acacia rendlei
Acacia retrorsa
Acacia rhetinocarpa
Acacia rhigiophylla
Acacia ridleyana
Acacia rivalis
Acacia robinae
Acacia saxicola
Acacia scalpelliformis
Acacia sciophanes
Acacia sedifolia
Acacia semitrullata
Acacia simulans
Acacia solandri
Acacia subflexuosa
Acacia subracemosa
Acacia subtilinervis
Acacia symonii
Acacia tayloriana
Acacia tenuinervis
Acacia vassalii
Acacia wardellii
Acacia wattsiana
Acacia williamsonii

Marion Simmons.

Acacia peuce (Waddywood)