

Dear Members

Thank you for the subscriptions and donations received since November last.

Welcome to new members:

J-W Kraatz P O Box 1867 Vista Ca 92083 USA  
Patrick Nugent, 28 Pacific Tce, E Ballina 2478  
SGAP Mildura Group, P O Box 259 MCF Mildura 3500  
Peter Taylor, RMB S343 Horsham 3401

CHANGE OF ADDRESS: John Wieck, 90 Murdoch Drive, Singleton WA 6211

MEMBERSHIP: Members of Study Groups are required to be financial members of the Society for Growing Australian Plants. The annual study group subscription is \$3 due on 30 June .

We would like to acknowledge receipt of newsletters from several regions and ask that copies from NSW and Canberra be forwarded. Study group Birds & Native Plants, Daisies, Dodonaea, Dryandra and Eucalypt newsletters have been received. Thank you.

SEED BANK

We have received more requests for seed since November than for the first part of last year, a fact which cheers me immensely. We have such a wide range of seed freely available it seems a pity not to use it.

SEED BANK DELETIONS

|              |                 |
|--------------|-----------------|
| A. binervata | A stenoptera    |
| nanodealbata | strongylophylla |
| pilosa       |                 |

Seed of any Acacia species not in the seed bank would be appreciated; please indicate whether seed is collected in bush or garden.

PLANTING OUT TECHNIQUES:

An interesting piece of information was published in 'Australian Horticulture' June 1988 regarding the above. Dr. Carl Whitcomb of Vic. College of Agriculture & Horticulture Burnley suggested some changes of technique when planting out:

- (a) not to add other materials (e.g peat, pine and other wood products) to planting soil
- (b) to dig wider rather than deeper planting holes and
- (c) not to prune at transplanting time.

(a) It seems research suggests that soil additives of this type suppress root growth by interrupting the water flow in and out of the root ball area, and tie up vital nutrients as they decompose.

(b) The use of wider holes assists growth of supportive lateral roots.

(c) Pruning removes foliage that is needed to produce energy for the root system and stimulates a flush of new growth which transpires water up to 10 times faster than mature leaves. This places excessive

demands on the root system, especially in hot weather.

Should any member try these techniques, I would like to receive a report on their findings in due course.

#### MEMBERS NOTES:

John Wieck wrote to inform us that he has moved to WA. The species growing near his home are A. saligna and A. rostellifera. He has tried to grow A. iteaphylla but not very successfully. There should be loads of small WA acacias he can chose from which will grow in the local yellow sand rather than trying to grow Eastern species.

Gwenda Macdonald of Croydon Vic reported that A. aphylla, a strange leafless +- succulent plant from WA, blew over in the wind, did not die but proceeded to send up a dense mass of vertical growth. It will tolerate pruning.

A. chinchillensis grew all over other plants and had to be pruned. It seems to have taken this treatment without mishap.

Fred Rogers wrote that A. oxyclada & A. quinetii are growing well in deep sand in western Vic. A. maxwellii, prostrate x up to 1m wide, is growing well on loam over clay. Fred reported that Lysiana exocarpis (mistletoe sp.) has occurred on A. mesineri and A. saligna.

Russ Cullen from Qld reported that the same old trouble keeps cropping up with their Acacias i.e. attack by ring barking beetles. A. denticulosa 1.5 m tall and ready to flower was their latest victim.

Thomas Ross from West Germany reported that A. kybeanensis was flowering in his greenhouse in February. So far it has proved to be the hardiest species for pot culture and it does not mind becoming pot bound. A. cardiophylla, A. dealbata, A. echinula and A. adunca were all flowering or about to in the greenhouse.

Chuck Young from Canberra sent in a large supply of A. subulata seed of a particularly attractive shrubby form which grows in Canberra. I must try this one as we already grow two different taller forms in our garden.

Chuck has had great difficulty in keeping his Acacias growing on and questions whether cold is the only problem. He feels that local factors such as soil, exposure and microclimate may be much more significant than regional climate.

Bruce Clark from Panmure Vic is still waiting for his shelter belt to grow large enough to be effective. In the meantime to encourage him in his efforts A. acinacea covered itself in flowers in its second year. Bruce has had problems with starlings pulling out his young plants. I guess the only solution is to remove the starlings!

Inez Armitage wrote of A. o'shanesii which is one of her favourite trees. It has particularly attractive pendulous foliage which is three-toned in colour with yellowish tips; the flowers are pale yellow and numerous.

She asks if anyone has successfully grown A. harpophylla (Brigalow) either in or outside its natural habitat. Can anyone help with this query?

## GROWING ACACIAS FROM SUCKERS:

There are two techniques which could be tried:

1. Sever the attachment to the parent plant making sure that your sucker has roots of its own before planting the sucker in a pot and treat it like a cutting placing it under plastic or glass
2. Sever the attachment to the parent and leave the sucker undisturbed in the ground for some weeks to grow on its own before potting up and treating as above or at least growing it on for some time in a shade house.

The list of species which sucker grows, it has now reached thirty-three. A full list will be published later.

## GREENING OF AUSTRALIA

Tree decline and vegetation loss in Australia is widely recognised as a growing menace which must be halted and reversed. Existing wood and shrublands, wherever they are, must be conserved and regeneration on agricultural and pastoral land accelerated.

Trees and vegetation in general play such an important role in the well-being of our soils preventing erosion and salting. They provide shelter and shade for stock on farms. One only has to observe the way stock crowd together under a lone small tree to see how necessary shade is to them. Trees and shrubs provide homes for wildlife, nesting sites and a food source for the many birds which in turn keep insects in check.

Where people live trees and shrubs purify the air, give us and the soil shelter from the elements, providing a buffer against pollution and noise and, of course, an aesthetic background to our living areas.

In recent years caring people and some Governments have been working together to educate the public of the value of our vegetation and to alert them to the dangers of its loss.

We can all play our part growing and encouraging the growing of trees and shrubs, especially Acacias, in many areas e.g. schools, churchyards, golfcourses, streets, play and rest areas and I am sure you can think of more. Acacias improve the nitrogen levels of the soil and if chosen to suit local conditions are fast growing giving quick cover which helps in the establishment of slower growing species.

I hope I am preaching to the converted but if you have not really thought about this problem and recognised its seriousness, now must be a good time to do so. There is plenty of literature available and there are Greening Australia organisations in each State.

If there are projects in which you are involved already, please write to me about them, listing the Acacias species which are being used so we can spread the information further.

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## ASGAP SEMINAR in TASMANIA January 1990

We in Tasmania hope that as many ASGAP members as possible will make the trip to Tasmania in January. We have arranged what we think is a really good programme with a balance of interesting talks, demonstrations, visits and tours.

John and I have just returned from a short trip to check out the route of the East Coast post conference tour, identifying interesting places and plants for visitors to see. The route we have chosen traverses a diverse and beautiful countryside which features among the general flora a good proportion of Acacia species found in Tasmania.

Acacia dealbata (Silver wattle) is very common, as is A. melanoxylon (Blackwood). A. verticillata, A. stricta, A. mucronata, A. mearnsii, A. terminalis (in flower), A. verniciflua, A. suaveolens, A. ulicifolia and A. genistifolia were also noted.

In a rainforest area in the southern forests we were impressed by a group of small trees with a beautiful weeping habit. These were an attractive form of the Tas. endemic, A. riceana.

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Please note that John and I will be away from 25 May until mid July. We are planning a two week's overseas trip, then on our return driving to WA going north as far as the Pilbara area. If anyone has advice on where to find good stands of Acacia in WA I would love to hear from them.

Marion Simmons