

ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS
ACACIA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER NO 60
JULY 1990

Dear Members

My thanks to those who have responded to my appeal for information on acacias considered suitable for growing in local areas as outlined in the last newsletter.

So far, reports have come from:

Melbourne Vic.	(1)
Hunter Region NSW	(1)
Dry area South Aust.	(1)
Near Perth W.A.	(1)
Tamborine Qld.	(1)
Southern Tas.	(2)

To put together a worthwhile article I will need more information from a wider climatic range, so I really would appreciate input from more members.

 Every day more Acacias are beginning to bloom in the garden. Acacia neriiifolia was the first with a burst of very bright yellow flowers. It is a lovely small open tree.

During winter A. iteaphylla and A. flexifolia flowered providing winter colour and in the last few weeks (mid July) A. baileyana has burst into golden blossom along the roadsides and in home gardens. It seems everyone grows this one. Different forms of A. retinodes seem to flower at any time.

SEED BANK - ADDITIONS

difformis, erinacea, mitchellii, oxycedrus, pruinosa and stegophylla

 My thanks to those who forwarded seed. Seed of any species not on our list would be appreciated. Please collect seed from the bush if you have the opportunity, label, stating whether from the garden or bush, give date and place of collection. Thank you.

I have had requests for seed of A. alpina. Is anyone able to help with this one? Also seed of A. dallachiana, phlebophylla, frigescens, lucasil and caerulescens (the old 'Buchan Blue') would be appreciated.

MEMBERSHIP - Thank you for subscriptions and donations received from members and Regions.

My thanks also to the Regions and Study Groups who have forwarded their newsletters. They are always welcome with much interesting information in them.

Members of Study Groups are required to be financial members of a SGAP Region. The annual subscription of \$3.00 was due on 30 June. A large red 'X' on your newsletter indicates that your sub. has not been received and that this will be the last newsletter I am able to send.

FINANCE

Balance at 30 June 1989		\$412.84
Subscriptions & donations	354.43	
Bank Interest	18.09	372.52
		<u>785.36</u>
Expenses		
Seeds	58.70	
Post	139.08	

& miscell. 23.76
Copying 85.20
Bank Charges 1.30 - 308.04
Balance \$477.32

MEMBERS' NOTES

IVAN TILEY of Beaufort Vic. has sent more information on the Clarkesdale Reserve near Ballarat mentioned in the last newsletter. It is a bird sanctuary with a really incredible number and variety of plants growing there. The climate is very cold in winter with no place for frost tender plants even though they are planted in the bush. Definitely worth a visit.

Ivan reported they have planted a mixed plantation on a property roadside verge consisting of four rows of trees for a distance of 2 km involving over 1750 trees. Acacias used were A. floribunda, iteaphylla, fimbriata and pravissima. It is hoped that by withholding water the plants will be encouraged to develop deeper root systems.

JEFF IRONS from England reported that he pre-treated seed of A. lucasii by soaking it in warm water, after which he mixed the seed with moist peat, placed them in a plastic bag and then put them in a refrigerator at 4-6 degrees c for six weeks. The seeds were sown in 50:50 peat and perlite, the pot placed in a propagator in a greenhouse. Temperature range 8-27 degrees c. After 4 weeks - no germination. The propagator was then placed outside (temp. range 5-20 degrees), one seedling appeared and after 3-4 weeks Jeff had four seedlings. Just shows one should not give up hope too soon!

ANGUS EMMOTT from Longreach Qld. has written to tell us that one of the ACIAR dry site trials (see last newsletter) is being undertaken on his property and he is looking after the trees which have been in for a year. Acacia plectocarpa, torulosa, salicina and holosericea are the species that have grown best to date. A. torulosa and holosericea were both flowering in mid June with the latter over 4 m tall.

A month or so ago the forestry people were again at Longreach and another 82 trees were planted including a large number of Acacia.

LEON STEINHARDT of Qld. reported in late June that A. polifolia was in flower with A. lauta and debilis in bud. The prolonged wet spell gave a boost to some Acacias that were making no progress at all, e.g. A. xiphophylla, coriacea and pyrifolia. Sadly, borers have caused the death of A. dunnii at 3 years of age and about 1.5 m tall. The borers frequently attack A. falcata, maidenii and podalyriifolia. Leon mentioned that A. leucoclada, concurrans and leiocalyx sucker freely.

IRENE CHAMPION has forwarded copies of '1989 Percy Isles Expedition-The Trials & Triumphs' which she wrote and 'One Hundred & One Trees of Mackay' which a Mackay Region group wrote. The books are excellent examples of what can be done by local groups; both give information on the occurrence of Acacias in these areas. Thank you Irene.

NEW SPECIES AND NAME CHANGES

Notes extracted from a series of papers on Acacia published in WA Herbarium's 'Nuytsia' Vol 7 (2) 1990 by R S Cowan and B R Maslin.

A number of Acacias have been named and described so that the names may be used in a forthcoming edition of the 'Flora of Australia'. They occur in south-west WA.

A. awestoniana - Endemic on Stirling Range. Spreading shrub to 3m tall with dark green stiff wavy-edged phyllodes and bright yellow ball flowers in October-November. Closely related and sometimes confused

with A. dictyoneura. It has much larger phyllodes than the latter. Both are grown in Tasmania.

A. cassicula - From Wagin to Jerramungup. Spreading shrub to 2.5 m tall with oblong to elliptic phyllodes with ball flowers in Spring. Related to A. lanuginophylla.

A. consobrina superficially resembles A. ixiophylla. It is a low spreading shrub with hairy leathery phyllodes and ball flowers in May-September. Mostly in Roe Botanical District.

A. flavipila (previously A. flavopila) Mostly found in Quairading - Hyden areas. Spreading shrub to 2m similar in habit to A. chrysopoda.
var flavipila - shrub not obviously resinous; phyllodes 2-3 times as long as wide; bud bracteoles exerted
var ovalis - obviously resinous; phyllodes twice as long as wide; not exerted in bud.

A. lanei is closely allied 'A. ixiophylla group' but distinguished by patches of white at base of phyllodes and flower stalks etc. Spreading shrub to 2 m tall with ball flowers on reduced racemes in July-August; found in area south & east of Hyden.

A. lanuginophylla - based on A. lanuginosa C. Gardner.

A. lobulata from Chiddarcooping Nature Reserve. Spindly shrub with terete phyllodes with net-like veins and solitary ball flowers in July.

A. spongolitica - Ongarup-Ravensthorpe area. Most closely related to A. ixiophylla & A. lanei. Spreading shrub with markedly compressed branchlets, elliptic phyllodes and bright yellow ball flowers in July-September.

A. verricula scattered in south-west. Shrub with reddish branchlets, linear elliptic phyllodes, ball flowers May-September. Has been confused with eastern form of A. ixiophylla, but differs in usually distinct main nerves, gland position and constricted pods.

The second group is related to A. deltoidea which occurs in north-west WA- all have more or less triangular shaped phyllodes.

The purpose of the publication of this paper is to provide names for two new taxa and to make available under Acacia several plants treated as Racosperma by Mr L. Pedley.

Acacia adenogonia based on A. deltoidea var? pungens Basionym: Racosperma adenogonium. Erect to spreawling shrub to 2 m with persistent stipules, slightly to densely hairy phyllodes; ball flowers May-August.

Acacia deltoidea (previously Racosperma deltoideum) Found mostly in Gardner Botanical and nearby districts. ssp deltoidea- Shrub to 3m with leathery sharply pointed phyllodes, bright yellow ball flowers March-August.

ssp ampla is found in two locations in the Admiralty Gulf area; a different appearing shrub with much larger, more elongated phyllodes than the type.

A. vincentii- known only from one collection from Edkins Range, West Kimberley. Shrub to 3 m tall with +- triangular phyllodes rounded at top; oblong flower heads in August.

The remaining notes will be held over until the November newsletter.

ACACIAS for BIRDS

Nesting sites for birds are just as important as food plants if you wish to encourage the birds to stay at your place. The most suitable plants for this purpose are prickly ones that provide shelter and protection from marauders. As well as nesting sites these plants can provide a variety of insects suitable for feeding young birds. Prickly Acacias such as A. verticillata, paradoxa and riceana for cool areas and A. colletioides, triptera and victoriae for hotter areas are good examples. Other Acacias such as A. baileyana, iteaphylla, decurrens and retinodes can provide food for seed eating birds. Make sure that water is always available.

WATTLE DAY - Perhaps 1 September has not been recognised officially as 'Wattle Day' but I cannot let it pass without making some attempt to remind you of it. When I look out of the window at the bright blossom everywhere in the garden, the first verse of the old song 'Song of the Wattle' seems appropriate :

The bush was grey
A week today
Olive green and brown and grey
But now the Spring has come this way
With blossoms for the Wattle. (Veronica Mason)

With best wishes and happy Acacia growing.

Marion Simmons
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LEGANA 7277

John and I will be away on holiday for a month from mid September, so if you need seed before our return please let me know as soon as you can. Packaging up seed is a very time consuming occupation!



MR. B. CLARK.
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ACACIAS AS FOOD PLANTS

I have received a request for information about wattle essence, apparently available in Victoria. Can anyone help with information? We would like to know which species and which part of the plant is used and the method of preparation.

I have read where wattle seeds are available in packets and used as a beverage or as flavouring in bread or biscuits. Can anyone advise which species, how they are used and what treatment is given first? Some Acacia species are known to be poisonous!

Another query dealt with wattle icecream served by Qantas. It is said to contain chips of toffee (French imported!). One report referred to wattle seed icecream and described it 'as a bit like coffee icecream with coffee grounds left in' but delicious. I wonder if this is the Qantas icecream.

I would be very happy to hear from you if you have any information to offer or suggestions where I could apply to find answers to these queries and also the results of studies undertaken some years ago on Acacias as food plants.

SPECIAL OFFER

Some copies of 'Acacia of Australia' Vols 1 and 2 at much reduced prices are still available. Perhaps they might make a good Christmas present!

Volume 1 (paperback) \$29.95 reduced to \$15.00

Volume 2 (hardcover) \$50.00 reduced to \$25.00

Post and Packing: \$4.00 per book
