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ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

ACACIA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 72

1994

Dear Members,

The best of spring has been and the wet weather has set in here. Why is it that here early spring is wetter and colder than winter? A few new acacias brightened things up with both *A. lineata* and *gracilifolia* flowering for the first time.

I forgot to mention in the last newsletter that I purchased Terry Tame's book "Acacias of Southeast Australia" for the group. It is available for loan to members who must pay postage both ways. (This may be expensive!) It will be a valuable reference for future leaders.

Thank you to the members who contributed items for this newsletter. I still have a couple of items for the next letter, but keep contributions coming in if you want three newsletters per year - the newsletter can be increased in size if necessary.

SEED BANK NEWS: Some seeds are in short supply and will not be replenished until next autumn so please list a few alternatives when ordering. I find it necessary to remind members to enclose a business sized stamped addressed envelope for each request for lots of 12 varieties of seed. If you only want 6 lots they will fit in an ordinary letter envelope. Some members have requested more than 12 lots of seed, but these cannot be sent (with certainty they will fit through the regulation postal slot). Seed packets are stapled on cardboard to keep them spread as much as possible and prevent them building up in the post and exceeding the regulation 5 mm. thickness. Some SGAP seed banks say they require more than 45¢ postage but if the thickness can be kept down this seems unnecessary. Note also that it is of assistance if you write your request list so that it can be cut up and the names inserted in the packets of seed. It also helps if the requests are in alphabetical order as most seed is in envelopes which are filed alphabetically. It is easier to work through these box by box.

Groups who are financial members of the Acacia Study Group are entitled to the same seed requests as individual members provided these are requested in the name of the group and not individual members. There is not enough seed in each packet to divide between members but if you have a number of members interested in growing from seed get them to put in a composite list.

Overseas member's seed request postage is covered by their membership fee and they are encouraged to ask for their yearly entitlement in one consignment as this saves postage.

ACACIA SLIDES: This is very much a stop, go, stop project. The problem is time to write notes to go with the slides - it is a long slow process. Browsing through the file of past newsletters I notice it was March 1984 when Marion Simmons first suggested this project. That it is now progressing, albeit slowly, is largely due to the contributions of Terry Tame and Inez Armitage. Thanks to John and Marion Simmons for slides of endemic Tasmanian species.

Regards Bruce.

FROM MEMBERS:

PLANTATIONS IN THE BEAUFORT AREA - Ivan Tiley of "Buln Gherin" Beaufort, Victoria writes; " Quite a bit of plantation work going on in the Beaufort district - we at Buln Gherin have a roadside plantation of nearly 2 kilometres in length - and 4 rows of trees. Many species of acacias planted, particularly the ones which do well in the area. *Iteaphylla*, *pravissima* and *floribunda* are all good growers with us. *Triptera*, *trineura*, *riceana* and *fimbriata* are going fairly well.

Many kilometres of the Western Highway were up graded during the last year, and there are now thousands of natives planted in alternate patches on the roadsides. Given a few years and they will be a great show."

ON A BUSH BLOCK AT CRANBOURNE SOUTH - "I garden for pleasure - for the birds and for my well-being and I'm not sure that other members want to read just a chatty account. But then that is what I would like to read - news of what other members grow and why- so here goes.

Golden yellow is such a happy colour and really lights up the garden. I have retired on 4 hectares of sandy heathland, half of which is natural bushland. Indigenous species growing here are *Ac. paradoxa*, *Ac. verticillata*, *Ac. oxycedras*, *Ac. mearnsii*, *Ac. suaveolens*, *Ac. melanoxylon* and *oxycedras* has hybridised with *Ac. longifolia*. Red-browed finches nest in the *Ac. paradoxa* each year.

I have acacias which flower each month of the year, varying in size from *Ac. elata*, to *Ac. wildenowiana* the grass wattle which is in flower now (July). *Ac. schinoides* has beautiful tan new foliage after profuse flowering in January.

Ac. baileyana has three colours in new growth - I have purple tips and would love cuttings of red tips and golden tips. Can anyone oblige - or tell me where I can buy plants, please?

My greatest joy at present is *Ac. merinthophora*. With its intricate, finely jointed foliage it grows among a clump of *Calothamnus*. Val Maher (Cranbourne South)

A.S.G.A.P. ACACIA STUDY GROUP - FINANCIAL BALANCE 1993-94

Income

Balance 1/7/93		686.60
Membership fees and donations	#	416.00
Interest on Account		12.88
Cash and Stamps on hand	*	29.20
TOTAL		<u>\$1144.68</u>

Expenses

Purchase of seeds		55.00
Newsletters (printing)		50.00
Postage, post bags & envelopes		81.40
Petty cash (on hand)	*	22.15
Miscellaneous	+	23.70
Gov'tment bank charges		0.24
Copy of slides		120.00
Book Purchase		19.95
Balance 30/6/93		772.24
TOTAL		<u>\$1144.68</u>

Includes large donations for seed supplied and copying of slides.

* Stamps on hand have been included in postage

+ Plastic and post bags (in stock), staples and tape etc.

The issue of only one newsletter in the year has enhanced the credit balance.

ACACIAS OF THE FLINDERS RANGES

"In my recently published Plant Identikit book of the Flinders Ranges I have included several acacia species including two rare and probably endangered (threatened) species - A. araneosa and A. confluens from the Arkaroola area.

I have just finished a very busy 18 months of effort with the booklet and during that time have covered over 11,000 kilometres. Acacias are an important genus in the region, as they are in most of arid Australia.

I had permission to collect small amounts of plant material in order to paint and identify specimens and was able to collect small amounts of seed in this way. I have very small seedlings just emerging of both A. araneosa and A. confluens and hope to get them to grow on.

A. araneosa, which has a very limited range, grows on the most precipitous rocky hill tops and very steep rocky slopes. I find it a fascinating plant, so wispy, cobweb-like describes it very well.

A. confluens is in direct contrast a dense leafy quite robust shrub with large strong seed pods and seeds. It is also of very limited range in rugged, rocky gorges.

Some years ago I was one of a party of five which tracked down a healthy population of A. barattensis thought until then to be known from only a dozen or so plants. The Brinkworth Area Group of SGAP have just returned from their annual campout in the Flinders Ranges, this year at Holowiliena station and we revisited the A. Barattensis plants discovered on that trip about ten years ago. We were pleased to find it still holding its own.

It also grows on rocky hillsides and along rocky creek beds. It is a many stemmed bush with thin somewhat sticky phyllodes.

- Rosemary Pedler, Koolunga. (Rosemary's "Wildflowers of the Northern Flinders Ranges" is a companion volume to the same for the southern section of the ranges. Pocket size it contains a map and brief description of the area and has paintings and notes on 70 species (one per page).)



Rosemary's favourite photo of Acacia araneosa taken at Arkaroola.

* It was sad to receive the news from Jeff Irons that Thomas Ross (Germany) has*
died. "I was at his funeral last week" writes Jeff, "he was 37. ... I brought
*back some seedlings of A. rossei from Bad Soden. They may become a memorial *
*to Thomas." *
* I cannot find when Thomas first joined the Acacia Study Group but *
in 1984 he wrote of his acacias in a harsh German winter and in later years of
also growing acacias in Spain. With Jeff Irons he had written a book on
*"Australian Plants in Europe". *

NEW MEMBERS: Welcome to the Bairnsdale SGAP, Athol and Marion Durre and Margaret Randall who have joined the group since the last newsletter. Athol and Marion are interested in edible acacia seed and Margaret who has an interest in growing small acacias has included a list of some 30 acacias she has growing.