

# DODONAEA STUDY GROUP

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DODONAEA  
VISCOSA SSP ANGUSTISSIMA

Dear Members,

You'll wonder at another newsletter so soon, but I have two reasons. One is that I'd like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a very Happy New Year, and express the hope that in the new year you'll be growing more Dodonaeas. I shall enclose a record sheet. I do hope that you'll all fill it in and return to me as soon as possible. If any of your Dods. have died recently include them and note why you think they died.

My second reason for a newsletter only two months after the previous one, is because I have had a request from Bill Payne for articles on Dodonaeas as he would like to feature them in a future issue of 'Australian Plants'. Can we all make a supreme effort (me included) to get some articles written on Dods? - this is one of the best ways I know, of getting our S.G.A.P. members interested in growing more. We can use articles that have already appeared in our newsletters, but I shall return copies of them to our members who wrote them; some of you may wish to revise the articles before I submit them to 'Australian Plants'.

Barbara Daly, the Federal Study Group Co-ordinator sent on to me the May, 1987 newsletter of the 'S.G.A.P. Birds and Native Plants Study Group'. You may be interested to read an article featured in this issue.....

## HOP BUSHES - the GENUS DODONAEA

It is hard to keep up with the continual taxonomic changes taking place in the Australian flora. The DODONAEAS were revised in 1984 - there are 68 recognised species of Dodonaea, 59 of which are endemic to Australia.

The hop-bushes are woody perennials occurring over a variety of natural habitats. The following examples illustrate just how diverse these natural habitats are:-

<u>Species</u>	<u>Natural Habitat</u>
<u>Dodonaea viscosa</u>	Coastal, often on sand dunes
<u>D. triquetra</u>	Dry and wet sclerophyll forest
<u>D. amblyophylla</u>	Mallee shrubland
<u>D. procumbens</u>	Open woodland in flat, low-lying often waterlogged areas
<u>D. polyzyga</u>	Skeletal soils on rocky slopes
<u>D. petiolaris</u>	Gibber plains of arid and semi-arid areas

Most Dodonaeas are shrubs 1-2m high but there is variation depending on the species and also conditions under which the species are grown. One, D. humifusa is a prostrate shrub less than 10cm high. D. viscosa may grow in a tree-like fashion to 8m.

It is the Dodonaea fruits, the "hops", rather than the flowers, which provide food for birds. Flowers are generally inconspicuous and short lived. The fruits are dry, three-winged capsules, varying in shape between species. Fruits may take up to 12 months to mature and often change from green to brilliant red or shades of pink and purple as they mature, thus providing a spectacular show.

The fruits of several species of Dodonaea were discovered by early European settlers who used them as a basis for home brews - hence the name "hop bushes". In our garden the hops have only been discovered by Crimson Rosellas and possibly Spotted Turtledoves. The Crimson Rosellas are very fond of the immature fruits of D. triquetra. The Turtledoves spend time beneath the bushes but I am not certain if they are actually feeding on the fallen hops. Wonga Pigeons are said to enjoy fallen hops.

I have no other records of birds feeding at Dodonaea fruits - possibly because Dodonaeas are seldom grown in gardens. If you can add any observations of birds using Dodonaeas - either in gardens or in the bush - they would be much appreciated.

Dodonaeas deserve a place in the garden. Under well-drained conditions they are easily propagated from cuttings or seeds. Fruit colour varies within species. If highly coloured fruits are desired then cuttings should be taken from a parent plant with well coloured fruits. D. angustissima, D. filifolia and D. intricata are hardy with coloured fruits. The Dodonaeas normally have male and female flowers on separate plants so that plants of both sexes are required if fertile fruits are to be set.

The Dodonaeas show considerable variation in foliage form. Some are simple leaved. Others, such as D. boroniifolia, with its red to purple-pink fruits, have much divided leaves and are well worth growing on account of their foliage alone. In some species, for example, D. caespitosa, the internodes are very short and the leaves appear clustered at the nodes. In D. filiformis the leaves are so close to each other that they overlap and obscure the branches. The Dodonaeas, especially those with divided leaves, should be a source of insect food.

A number of Dodonaeas including D. angustissima and D. boroniifolia are recommended as screen plants. Species such as these would provide valuable dense shelter for birds.

(Illustrated by a drawing of Dodonaea triquetra by Colleen Werner)

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I have sent cuttings to Doris Gunn and Phyllis Dadswell, so I look forward to hearing how successful they are. When visiting Marion Simmons garden in October, I was given cuttings from female plants of D. bursariifolia, D. humifusa, D. procumbens, D. ptarmicifolia, and D. inaequifolia. Marion and John have a lovely garden and are always willing to share their 'goodies'.

#### NEWS FROM MEMBERS

Randy Linke from California is a good correspondent. He reports that he used both hot water treatment and no treatment on seeds of four species, he has tried to date. He had excellent results with the hot water treatment on all. Only D. lobulata and D. boroniifolia gave good results without treatment. Randy has bought seeds of D. attenuata (D. viscosa ssp. angustissima), D. concinna, D. coriacea, D. hackettiana and D. hirsuta from Mindethana Seed Co. so we wish him well with them. I have sent him seed of some that Mindethana couldn't supply. Randy's mother is an artist and he hopes that she will do some illustrations for us as material becomes available.

I have written to Mindethana requesting more seed for our seedbank and correcting a few Dod! naming errors in their catalogue.

Ida Jackson writes that she had seed of D. truncatiales and D. boroniifolia. They germinated quite well, but died whilst she was 'down with flu' - What rotten luck. Do hope Ida will have another go.

Helen Bizzi writes that she has just planted lots of Dod seeds and will report progress. She believes that D. truncatiales probably requires a cooler or wetter climate than they have in Elizabeth North, S.A. She has grown two plants to about 4 feet. One died and the other has had odd branches die. This species grows in dry sclerophyll forest often near fresh water and river systems in central and south coast and central tablelands regions of N.S.W. and eastern Victoria' (quote from J. Wests revision). Helen also reports that D. macrossani has not been very happy in her garden (I also have no luck with this species). She also comments 'Regarding Arnold Sandells experience with D. subglandulifera, I have found them to be a bit 'touchy'. However, I'm sure that if he plants the seed individually in single pots, so he doesn't have to pot them up, and perhaps changes his soil mixture, he should get better results. I have found a coarse sand, peat moss mixture satisfactory'. Thanks for those comments, Helen.

Phyllis Dadswell sent a short note on a lovely card with a hop illustrated by Nancy Gemmell on the cover. I think that this is possibly the introduced 'hop' which has invaded so large an area of South Australia and Northern Territory, by the look of its leaves - Rumex, I think it is called. It would be lovely if one of our artists could produce cards with our Dods. illustrated. I'll have to try pressing some to mount on cards. Phyllis wrote that she grew D. lanceolata a few years ago, but it wasn't a very exciting plant.

An interesting letter appeared in the S.A. Region, S.G.A.P. newsletter May, 1987 from Ida Jackson suggesting that we grow more plants from our own State. She mentioned Lasiopetalums - I also find these regarding plants - Scaevolae, etc and of course, some beautiful Dodonaeas mentioning that D. humilis in its coastal form is a good ground cover. I'm all for growing plants from our own localities, but I can't resist plants from elsewhere. I have some nice small plants from cuttings I collected on Kangaroo Island including their endemic Grevillea muricata.

#### SEED LIST

- |                                |                              |
|--------------------------------|------------------------------|
| D. baueri                      | - D. multijuga               |
| * D. boroniifolia              | D. petiolaris                |
| D. bursariifolia               | - D. peduncularis            |
| D. concinna                    | D. physocarpa                |
| D. coriacea                    | D. ptarmicifolia             |
| - D. filifolia                 | D. sinuolata ssp. sinuolata  |
| * D. filiformia                | - D. stenophylla             |
| D. heteromorpha                | D. subglandulifera           |
| D. hexandra                    | - D. triangularis            |
| D. humilis                     | D. triquetra                 |
| D. inaequifolia                | - D. truncatiales            |
| - D. lanceolata var lanceolata | D. viscosa ssp. angustissima |
| D. lobulata                    | D. viscosa ssp. burmanniana  |
| - D. macrossani                | - D. viscosa ssp. cuneata    |
| D. microzyga ssp. microzyga    | D. viscosa ssp. spatulata    |

Seed is available by sending a stamp addressed envelope (58c). Please send a 230 x 100mm envelope if ordering more than three packets. Thankd to those members who have sent seed. You will be able to ascertain from this list what seed is required by the study group, please collect seed when possible to keep up our stocks.

DODONAEA INTRICATA

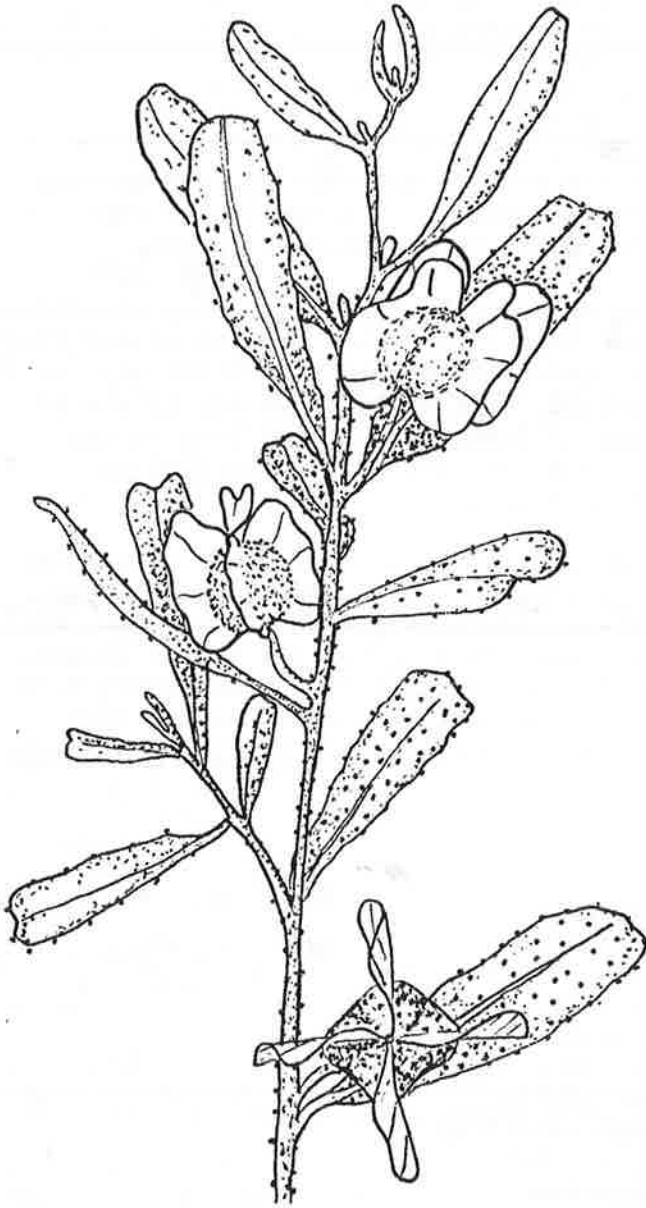
This species may be found only in the Gawler Ranges of the Upper Eyre Peninsula of South Australia. It grows on granite hilltops, slopes and rocky outcrops. It is closely related to D. baueri and D. viscosa ssp. cuneata; differing in both fruit and leaves with these species.

The specific name refers to the branching pattern of the plant, and flowers may be found amongst these intricate branches in summer and mature capsules in the following spring.

Like most Dodonaeas, D. intricata has male and female flowers on separate plants (dioecious). It's a spreading shrub 0.2 - 1m high. The leaves are simple with a short petiole; they are oblong, 0.9 - 1.2cm long and have small glands on both the leaves and stems. The margins of the leaves are entire and can be sinuate (wavy) or have small regular teeth or lobes. The capsule is 4 winged, rounded but small being only about 12mm x 12mm, with the wing extending 2 - 4mm beyond the body of the carpel.

This is the species that I had hoped to find in the Gawler Ranges, S.A. last July. Hence I haven't as yet seen this plant, but as with D. pinifolia in our last newsletter, I have attempted to put together a description from information available.

The description is inspired by one of Karen Stewart's drawings, I do wish that I could draw myself. Do any of our members feel inspired to send drawings to me for the newsletter? I will happily put together a description but better still, if you felt that you could provide both, I would be delighted.



*D. intricata*

I have just received in the mail, from Frances Quinn, a colleague of Judy Wests the news that Dodonaea biloba has been described in the latest copy of Brunonia. This is the species from Chinchilla and Roma. Now that Judy's description (I note that Frances uses the word treatment) of this species has been published, we can legitimately use the new name and to my knowledge all known Dodonaeas have a botanical name. We are lucky as so many of the other Study Groups are struggling with many un-named species and much confusion in the nomenclature.

Christmas Greetings

*Janette*