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Library

S.G.A.P. DODONAEA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 3.

May 1984

Leader: Jeanette Closs (Mrs.)
7 Vyella Court,
Austins Ferry. 7011.

Dear Members,

In my last letter, I mentioned that there were no Dodonaea growing naturally on our block, but to my delight I found one only D. viscosa last week. D. triquetra has now flowered and many other species are flourishing. All my other plants have done well on 1 flagon of water a week, upended in the soil alongside them, through this long hot dry summer. The Derwent Valley (our house and our block are both in this valley) is said to have had its driest period in living memory. Our annual rainfall is usually 20-24 inches (500-600mm.) but its been much less in recent years and the paddocks are still brown. One of our recent delights has been to see Bettongs as we leave our block at dusk. They are a small wallaby-like animal, very light brown in colour. We have seen them clearly when our headlights pick them out.

I have finished my very enjoyable term as President of the Tasmanian Region, so should have more time to spare for growing Australian plants especially Dods.

I haven't heard from Judy West for sometime, but I imagine that she is waiting for the publication of the revision of the genus Dodonaea before contacting me. However, I have heard that the revision will at last be published this month in the C.S.I.R.O Journal Brunonia Vol. 7, No. 1. We should soon be benefiting from the enormous amount of work that Judy has put into this revision.

SEED BANK

I have received seed from a few members, many thanks to these people. I have also sent out some seed when requested. I occasionally buy small quantities of seed but don't feel that we can afford to spend much on seed at present. Donations of seed are always welcome. I will print an up to date list in the next newsletter.

NEW MEMBERS

I would like to welcome 6 new members:

June Gay, 3 Baumass Road, Riverwood. 2210. June is sponsored by the Eastern Hills group

- Beverley O'Keefe, 'Wallalee', Springsure, 4722
The National Botanic Gardens, Canberra
- S.G.A.P. Qld. Region
S.G.A.P. N.S.W. Region
Mr. M. Hunt, Caves Road, Wellington

I would like to thank the Victorian, Queensland and N.S.W. Regions for sending me their newsletter. There is always interesting information in these regional newsletters.

SEED GROWING EXPERIMENT

Lyn Stewart is trying the experiment (as mentioned in Newsletter No. 2) to test different methods of growing Dods, she suggests that the time of the year could be significant. My experiment hasn't turned out too well as the seed trays got overwet. I planted 3 trays of D. coriacea, D. microzyga and D. concinna One with the boiled water method, one with seeds treated in the microwave and the other planted in the normal way.

<u>Result</u>	<u>Boiled water</u>	<u>Microwave</u>	<u>Control</u>
D. coriacea	nil	nil	nil
D. microzyga	8/10	1/10	6/10
D. concinna	3/10	nil	4/10

This seems to indicate that the boiled water treatment is worthwhile. D. coriacea comes from the north of Australia, so this could account for no germination of this species. I hope to try a similar experiment in September with species which grow naturally in similar areas. Has anyone else tried this experiment and come to any conclusions?

The National Botanic Gardens correspondent writes 'I have been informed by CSIRO's Division of Forest Research that with the hard seeded Dodonaeas, in general they obtain roughly 80% to 90% germination with the boiling water treatment (i.e. pouring boiling water over the seeds and allowing to cool) and 90% with nicking the seed, using a scalpel on the cotyledon end of the seed'.

RECORD SHEETS

Many thanks to Lyn Stewart, Jo Walker and Ida Jackson for filling in and returning the record sheets. I would appreciate it if other members could do the same.

NOTES FROM MEMBERS

Marion Simmons had asked Val Hando from Chinchilla, Qld. to send me specimens of Dodonaeas growing in this area and Val sent me a lovely collection and some very interesting information. These have been mounted and put in our 'herbarium'. A few species I hadn't seen before.

Beverley O'Keefe also sent specimens from Springsure, Qld. which were a good addition to our collection.

Lyn Stewart writes great long letters - her knowledge and enthusiasm make her an ideal study group member. She is growing 24 different species. A friend of Lyn's pointed out D. hexandra to Lyn. Lyn had thought that this was a Hibbertia, as she hadn't seen it with its seed capsules. This is understandable. It is a small shrub with pale green small linear revolute leaves, the fruits are 3 angled and globose, but have no wings. It grows in the south of S.A. and possibly extends into the Victorian mallee.

Hugh Stacey writes that he's beginning to take more notice of Dod's since receiving our newsletters, so that indicates that our Study Group is achieving one of its aims.

Ida Jackson reports that she always scalds seed of Dodonaeas and allows it to stand for 24 hours before sowing. This, says Ida gives quite good germination of D.baueri and D. angustissima.

Marion Simmons reports that 'she gets quite good results from some species of Dods without pretreatment. Her D. humifusa, which is really a minute plant so far, covered itself entirely in flowers. It was a lovely surprise.'

I had an invitation from the Maroondah group, Vic. Region to put on a display of Dodonaeas at the Melbourne Wildflower Show on the 4th and 5th August. I had to decline as I haven't got the right sort of material for display work yet. However I would like to work towards getting material together that could be presented at shows. Has anyone got any suggestions?

QUOTES FROM 'WILD MEDICINE IN AUSTRALIA'

by A.B. & J.W. Cribb

Dodonaea viscosa

Wild Hops, Hop-bush

Species of *Dodonaea* are most easily recognized when they are in fruit; they produce sharply-angled, usually three-winged capsules which may be green, reddish or purple. The plants are shrubby with the flowers usually inconspicuous and lacking petals. All species have the common name of hop-bush.

D. viscosa is a variable species but typically is a tall shrub whose entire leaves have a lacquered appearance; the winged capsules, which are produced in abundance, are 2 cm or more in length. While most species of the genus are restricted to Australia, this one is widespread and occurs in most tropical countries. The plant contains tannin and is astringent; one variety has been used in Cape York Peninsula by aborigines in the form of a root decoction for cuts and open wounds. In South Africa and India the species has had similar use, and as well has been taken for stomach disorders, sore throat and haemorrhoids.

For stings by stonefish and stingrays, the aborigines of the Lockhart River Mission applied chewed leaf and juice and bound the wound for several days.

Dodonaea lanceolata (a hop-bush): used for snakebite; decoction drunk or bathed in for body pains.

Chapter headed 'Purely for Pleasure'

Dodonaea is the genus, mainly Australian, of shrubs with frequently viscid leaves and angled, often winged, fruits. These fruits show a superficial resemblance to the true hops, but are not botanically related to them. The resemblance was sufficient for beer-thirsty pioneers to use them as a substitute in brewing and as it turned out they were an adequate replacement, imparting a satisfactorily bitter flavour to the brew. Various species were used; one given special mention was *D. angustissima*, the slender hop-bush.

One species which extends far beyond Australian shores is D. viscosa. Leaves of this hop-bush have been chewed in Peru as a stimulant in the same way as are coca leaves, the source of cocaine; hop-bush leaves have been used as an adulterant of coca. The leaves and bark have been shown to contain an alkaloid.

REQUESTS

1. Would you please ask any nursery that you visit, what *Dodonaea*s they are growing and report back to me. If you can encourage them to grow more this will be good. If you ~~believe~~ that any species that they are growing is wrongly named, ask for a specimen and send it to me or to Judy to check. There appear to be so many wrongly named species about.

2. I would like some of our members to write a full description of any *Dodonaea* species, so that I can print one description in each newsletter. Please don't leave all this to me.

3. When sending specimens for cuttings or the 'herbarium', or for identification, would you please try to include flowers or fruit or note whether it is male or female or if it has both male and female flowers, which happens with some species.

FINANCE

Balance brought forward	\$8.23	Postage	\$ 6.75
Subscriptions	10.00	Envelopes	2.44
Donation	<u>3.00</u>		
	\$21.23		<u>\$ 9.19</u>
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DODONAEA filiformis (syn. *D. ericifolia*)

This is a Tasmanian endemic, the only other Dod growing in this island is a form of *D. viscosa*. It is an erect dioecious shrub (male and female flowers on separate plants) growing from 1-2m. It is multistemmed and the branches are dense. The leaves are simple very dense, sticky, linear and usually 1.5-2 cm long. The flowers are insignificant and are in terminal and axillary groups. The capsule is broader than long, three winged, papery, dark red at maturity and contains 2 to 3 seeds. It flowers in December. It grows along river banks in rocky and gravelly soils and in dry sclerophyll forests.

It was first named in 1821 by Johann H.F. LinkG. In 1831 George Don described *D. ericaefolia*, it was later named *D. salsolifolia*. However Judy West after much research believes these to be the same species, so the original name *D. filiformis* has taken precedence over *D. ericifolia*, which is the name by which it has been known for many years.

I have just received a parcel of cuttings of Dodonaeas and Prostantheras from G. Althofer at Burrengong Arboretum and they were quickly put in the cutting frame. I would particularly like cuttings of *D. tenuifolia*. I have had a number of specimen sent me of this species and they have in each case been wrongly named. Has any member found it growing naturally?

Keep growing Dods, and getting to know them.

Kindest regards,

Jeanette Closs