



Member's Correspondence: Database of Landscape Species

From the May 2009 issue of the Study Group Newsletter.

I agree that more professional participation (in the Study Group) would be great. However, I find that many landscape architects / designers, both new and old, seem to be fixed on minimalist design and inappropriate (exotic) species selection. I suspect that this is basically caused by the need to ensure that selected plants are available, that they have been proven in horticulture, that they suit clients' wishes (and demands!) and unfortunately designers do not always take (or have) the time to investigate alternative species selections.

I know that the only way I can use many of the native species we know to be successful and appropriate is to organise plant pregrowing contracts several years in advance of planting to ensure that the required species are available in optimum quantity and quality.

If the Study Group establishes a database of species it will need to be carefully organised to meet the potential users' design criteria and to be appropriate for the various climatic regions of Oz. Several of us in SGAP South-east Queensland have been considering this as a way to influence garden designers to use native plants here, but we are still in the formative stages of the data base process - we really have not advanced very far at all!!!

Lawrie Smith, Queensland.

I think Lawrie's comments above, dovetail with Jeff Howe's article "Are Native Plants increasing in Popularity" (Newswetter No. 65). In it, Jeff suggested the possibility of a pamphlet distributed to the industry on the care of Australian plants. Lawrie's suggestion of a well researched regional data base of suitable species, their requirements and supply goes a bit further in the push to promote our plants and reduce possible negative experiences of professional and amateur gardener/designers alike.

Jo Hambrett, Study Group Leader