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**ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING
AUSTRALIAN PLANTS**

MELALEUCA AND ALLIED GENERA STUDY GROUP

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NEWSLETTER NO. 20 July 2000

Dear Members,

Verna and I completed our trip to the United Kingdom and Europe which we thoroughly enjoyed. Except for a very cold day in Scotland and a few showers here and there, and a few cloudy days, we enjoyed good weather. The spring flower display in Britain was spectacular to say the least with masses of daffodils, cinerarias, tulips, pansies, stocks, azaleas, rhododendrons etc in full flower. We spent the day before we left to return home in Hyde Park where massed beds of roses were in full flower. They mightn't have been Australian but they were well worth looking at !! We spent a day in Kew Gardens where we saw many Australian plants growing in open areas and in glasshouses. In the extensive outdoor rockery area many plants of *Leptospermum*, *Callistemon*, *Grevillea*, to name a few, were either in flower or in bud. One particularly striking plant was a specimen of *Callistemon palludosus* which was some 2 metres high and covered in flowers from ground level to the top. In the 'temperate house' there was a number of Australian plants including *Anigosanthus* spp, *Pimelea* spp, *Lomandra* spp, to name a few and as a centrepiece a magnificent specimen of *Callistemon comboynensis* which was in full flower with flower spikes about twice the size of what we expect to see here. The Palm House where the palms and ferns are grown contained a wide range of Australian ferns including tree ferns and the king fern from Nth Qld, *Angiopteris evecta*.

NAME CHANGES

The following name changes have been extracted from the A.P.S. S.A. Region journal of May 2000 from an article submitted by Ivan Holliday. All these names are revision of names changed during the revision of *Melaleuca* by Lyn Craven.

M. israelitensis reverts to its former name of *M. pentagona* var. *latifolia*

M. smartiorum is to be *M. sapientes*

M. smithiorum is to be *M. faberi*

Lyn Craven has provided me with a copy of his paper, - **Enumeration of the Species and Intraspecific Taxa of *Melaleuca* (*Myrtaceae*) occurring in Australia and Tasmania** - which lists the 219 Australian and Tasmanian species of *Melaleuca* sens. Austral. Auctt. which are considered to represent *Melaleuca*. *Melaleuca*, with 219 species, is one of the larger flowering plant genera in the Australian- Tasmanian biogeographic region, and in *Myrtaceae* it is the second largest genus after *Eucalyptus* within the same area. The paper contains a number of keys for the various species and lists the location of where the type species was collected and the distribution of all the species but does not list the specific characteristics of each species. No doubt, this will be published when the revision is completed.

A new species of *Phymatocarpus* has been described and is to be known as *Phymatocarpus interioris*. Details are as follows :

Shrub to 1.5 metres tall. Leaves 4.4 – 9.2 mm long, 3-7.5 wide, short-petiolate or subsessile ; blade glabrous or hairy, very broadly ovate to circular to transversely broadly elliptic, in transverse section sublunate, the veins 5-9 and parallel-pinnate. Inflorescence with 2-6 triads; bracteoles absent. Hypanthium sericeous. Sepals costate or not, very broadly triangular or elliptic, 0.7-0.8 mm long. Staminal ring well developed, 1.4 – 2.8 mm long. Stamens 23-30 per flower, often in distinct antepetalous clusters (the bundle per claw per se weakly developed) , the filaments glabrous, mauve, purple or pink, 3.3- 5.5 mm long. Style 7-8 mm long. Ovules 5-10 per locule. Fruit 2.7-3.9 mm long with the distal rim flat or more or less so. Seed generally ovoid; cotyledons obvolute.

Phymatocarpus interioris occurs in Southern Western Australia in the Lake King – Peak Charles area . It grows in mallee and eucalypt woodland, shrubland and low heathland, apparently preferring well-drained sandy soil that often overlies clay. Flowers have been recorded between September and November. Specimens now assigned to *P. interioris* previously were often identified as *P. maxwellii*, perhaps because of the similar leaf colour and, for the narrower – leaved plants, similar leaf shape. The well-developed staminal ring, however, clearly distinguishes *P. interioris* from *P. maxwellii*.

The generic position of *Melaleuca punicea* has been reviewed and it is decided that “ Morphological aspects of the androecium, gynoecium and seeds of *Melaleuca punicea* Byrnes are such that the particular combination of character states renders the species anomalous not only in *Melaleuca* L. but also in *Regelia* Schauer in which it has also been included. The new genus, *Petraemyrtus* Craven, is described to accommodate the species. ” The plant previously known as *M. punicea* will now be known as *Petraemyrtus punicea*.

Petraemyrtus is a monotypic genus that occurs on the sandstone plateau and outlying sandstone massifs of the Alligator Rivers region of the Northern Territory. The generic

epithet is derived from the Greek *petra* (stone,rock) and *Myrtus* (Myrtle) , an allusion to the the habitat in which this interesting myrtaceous plant occurs.

GARDEN INSPECTION

Elsbeth Jacobs , who lives at 377 Cambridge Road, Montrose, Victoria (telephone 03-97283492) has offered her garden for inspection by local members or members who may be in the area on holiday. Elspeth has also advised that cuttings of various plants would be available to interested members. A list of the plants being grown by Elspeth is given later in this newsletter .

MEMBERS REPORTS

As stated above Elspeth Jacobs lives at Montrose in Victoria and she has forwarded a comprehensive list of the plants within the study group parameters which are doing well in her garden.. The soil in Elspeth's garden varies from clay to clay loam to sand. Frosts are experienced about 4 or 5 times per year down to about --2 or --3 degrees . A slow release fertiliser low in phorphorus is used at planting time but fertiliser is rarely used again after that initial dressing. In general humidity during the summer period is fairly low. Details of plants being grown are listed below :

Calothamnus quadrifidus - this plant has stood up well to severe pruning and is regarded as a very hardy plant . The form being grown is known as Murphys Form and its characteristic is that flowers are formed right around the stem instead of the normal form which has flowers only part way round the stem

Calothamnus gilesii – this plant is in a dry spot and receives little attention but it flowers well each year

Beaufortia decussata – grows easily and , as it has an upright habit, it is useful for small spaces.

Beaufortia incana – has remained as a small shrub.

Beaufortia purpurea – This is a useful plant as it flowers in summer when there are not many other plants in flower.

Beaufortia shaueri – this has formed a dainty small bush.

Beaufortia sparsa – This is considered to be a very important plant in the garden as it provides a brilliant display of red flowers in February each year. The long stems make for excellent cut flowers which retain their colour for many years.

Beaufortia squarrosa – this plant also provides a good display of brilliant red flowers in late spring. It is smaller-growing than *B.sparsa*.

Beaufortia sp. aff. *squarrosa* – similar in habit to *B. squarrosa* except that it flowers in autumn.

Eremaea – Plants of species of this genus have been tried many times but the only success has been with *E. hadra* which may also be known as *E. sp . aff. violacea* B and which may also be confused with *E.atala* var. *hadra*. It is a small bush which produces deep

purple flowers with gold anthers. It is growing against a north-facing wall which is hot and dry but it does receive some summer watering.

Kunzea affinis – this is a tall shrub which flowers prolifically and provides good cut flowers .

Kunzea affinis x *preissiana* – has similar habit to that of *K. affinis*.

Kunzea baxteri x *pulchella* – this a large bush with a weeping habit and therefore requires a lot of space . The greyish coloured leaves contrast very well with the red flowers.

Kunzea recurva – plants of this species grow well but flower very poorly.

Leptospermum brevipes – This plant is considered to be a great asset to the garden . It is a large weeping shrub with very fine foliage and dainty white flowers in November.

Leptospermum macrocarpa – The size of the flowers and fruit of this species make it worth growing.

Leptospermum rotundifolium ` Jervis Bay form' – this plant makes a good filler with its purple flowers .

Leptospermum rotundifolium ` Lavender Queen' – This is smaller than the previously mentioned cultivar with smaller pale mauve flowers.

Leptospermum sericeum – The silver foliage and the large pink flowers make this a worthwhile plant.

Melaleuca capitata – this is a dome shaped bush with yellow flowers.

Melaleuca depauperata – this plant gets straggly and produces only small flowers.

Melaleuca filifolia – this plant grows and flowers well with long stems of purple flowers (Editors note : this plant has reverted to its former name of *M. nematophylla*) .

Melaleuca fulgens ssp. *steadmanii* - a plant well worth growing with outstanding flowers.

Melaleuca leptospermoides – grows poorly and not a great success (Editors note : this could be the plant now known as *M. ryeae* .)

Melaleuca pulchella – a small plant useful along the edge of garden beds.

Melaleuca sclerophylla – not successful.

Melaleuca teretifolia – good flower colour but needs to be in a location where it can grow tall.

Melaleuca wilsonii – Likes a damp location but well worth growing for the good flowering display.

Phymatocarpus maxwellii – this plant flowers well but the plant generally looks straggly.

Phymatocarpus porphyrocephalus – plant is growing well but flowers poorly.

Regelia velutina – these plants look good with their silvery foliage but do not flower. .

Other species of *Regelia* have also grown well but do not flower . Should anyone have had success with getting *Regelia* to flower Elspeth would be pleased to hear from you.

Although Julie Strudwick of Benalla in Victoria is not a member of the study group she has forwarded a very comprehensive report on the plants related to the study group which she has growing in her garden.

The garden area straddles a narrow ridge which is surrounded by indigenous regrowth forest of *E. polyanthemos*, *E. gonicalyx*, *E. macrorhyncha* and some *E. dives*. The garden area is predominantly confined to the areas disturbed during construction of the house, dam and entrance driveway. The garden area is very well drained. The indigenous rock is mudstone - some metamorphosed and very hard - some very soft. Topsoil is very shallow. The sides of the ridge are steep and mostly tiered with log or rock walls and with some imported soil in some areas. Rainfall is mainly of winter incidence and varies from 492 mm in 1997 to 1137 mm in 1993 (the year of severe floods in Benalla) . Frosts do not present a problem. Most of the garden is heavily shaded in winter by the surrounding forest but in summer receives a fair amount of sun during the day. Julie's garden is at an elevation of some 400 metres. Because of space restrictions in the newsletter it will be necessary to condense some of Julie's comments but I hope this will not detract from the excellence of the report.

Callistemon 'Candy Pink' – flowers well only in a wet year.

Callistemon 'Captain Cook' - as for *C.* 'Candy Pink'.

Callistemon 'citrinus x Endeavour' – Plants in a hot, dry position and produce a few flowers each year.

Callistemon 'Eureka' - flowers heavily each year.

Callistemon 'Firebrand' – a small sprawly plant which produces a few flowers each year.

Callistemon 'King's Park Special' – has to compete with a lot of root competition from nearby trees - flowers in good years.

Callistemon 'Little John' – even though it is fairly well shaded it flowers well each year.

Callistemon pallidus – flowers well each year.

Callistemon pinifolius – has grown well but rarely flowers.

Callistemon pityoides – a small plant which flowers well each year.

Callistemon rigidus – 3 plants in different locations – the one which receives summer sun, winter shade and which has its roots heavily shaded is the only one which flowers in most years. The others flower only in good years.

Callistemon 'Rocky Rambler' – suffers from heavy root competition and has grown poorly and has not flowered.

Callistemon salignus – an open, spindly plant but it flowers each year.

Callistemon sieberi – gets summer sun and winter shade but flowers well each year.

Callistemon 'Western Glory' – a compact shrub to 2 metres which flowers well.

Callistemon 'White Anzac' – this is in imported soil and flowers well each year.

Calothamnus pinifolius – 1 metre high after 5 years and flowered for the first time in 1999.

Calothamnus quadrifidus – flowers well each year and is popular with honey-eaters.

Calothamnus robustus – is 5 years old and is slow-growing but flowered in 1999.

Calothamnus rupestris – 3 plants – slow growing but flower well each year.

Calothamnus validus – as for *C. rupestris*.

Calothamnus sp. – bought as ‘hybrid prostrate’ – plant is 1.75 metres high by 4 metres wide and is growing near a driveway so may receive some additional water. This plant has bright green foliage and produces orange-red flowers prolifically each year. A popular haven for small birds.

Calothamnus gilesii – grew well for 8 years then suddenly died.

Beaufortia purpurea – the original plant did well for a number of years before getting overgrown. Cuttings from this plant are doing well.

Beaufortia shaueri – the original plant grew for several years before dying suddenly but a replacement is growing well.

No success has been achieved with any other species of *Beaufortia*.

Eremaea – a number of species have been tried without success.

Kunzea ambigua – receives about half-sun for most of year, is some 4 metres tall and flowers well each year.

Kunzea ambigua ‘pink’ – grows poorly and flowers poorly.

Kunzea ‘Badja Carpet’ – has grown to 1 metre high by 3 metres wide and flowers well only after good rain.

Kunzea micrantha – rarely flowers.

Kunzea micromera – planted in 1997, is growing well and flowered in 1999.

Kunzea parvifolia ‘compact’ – a number of plants all growing well but flower better in wet years.

Kunzea pomifera – growing well as a good ground cover but only flowers well after good rains.

Kunzea preissiana – plant is 6 years old, is unthrifty and has never flowered.

Kunzea pulchella – flowers heavily each summer.

Kunzea recurva – produces a few flowers each year but is not a strong grower.

Leptospermum ‘Pacific Beauty’ – did well for 10 years but was removed to make way for house alterations.

Leptospermum ‘Copper Sheen’ – this plant flowers each year but it is badly overgrown by other plants.

Leptospermum ‘Jervis Bay Form’ – grows and flowers well in imported soil but will not persist in the indigenous soil.

Leptospermum ‘Julie Ann prostrate’ – grows well as a ground cover.

By the time Julie got to Melaleuca she was probably suffering from writers cramp and no wonder!! The following list is of the *Melaleuca* species Julie has in her garden. Those marked * are generally unthrifty and do not flower well.

Melaleuca armillaris; *blaerifolia*; *brevifolia*; *campanae* (growing well but not yet flowered); *decussata*; *diosmifolia*; * *elliptica*; *filifolia* (now *nematophylla*) (flowers well); *fulgens* (orange, mauve and red forms); * ‘*Georgiana Molloy*’; *gibbosa*; *glaberrima*; *holosericea* (small but flowers well); *hypericifolia*; *incana* ‘Velvet Cushion’; * ‘*Ivo Hammet*’; *lateralis*; * *linariifolia*; *longistaminea*; *

macronychia ; megacephala ; micromera ; * nesophila ; * radula ; thymifolia ;
thymifolia 'dwarf purple' ; urceolaris ; * wilsonii ; sp. 'Wongamine'.

Barbara Buchanan from Myrrhee in Victoria sends the following report on species she has growing in her garden. The soil in Barbara's garden is predominantly a red clay which has fair to good drainage characteristics. Heavy frosts are experienced during winter.

Phymatocarpus maxwellii – several plants are surviving and, although they do not flower prolifically, they grow fairly well with a compact growth habit.

Phymatocarpus porphyrocephalus – this plant has attractive shiny green foliage but flowers erratically. When it does flower the flowers are usually short-lived.

The *Callistemons* in Barbara's garden flowered particularly well in 1999.

Callistemon recurvus - flowers heavily in most years.

Callistemon 'Injune' - flowers well on a number of occasions throughout the year.

A number of unnamed *Callistemon* seedlings grown from seed collected near the N.S.W./Vic border are growing well and are predominantly in shades of pink.

Calothamnus gilesii - a stiff, upright plant some 2 metres high and some 9 years old. It flowers well each year with bright red colour.

Calothamnus validus – several plants in the garden which flower most years but are at their best in years of good rainfall.

Calothamnus asper (yellow form) – small plants which have not yet flowered.

Eremea purpurea – grew and flowered well for a number of years but died during a drought period.

Eremea beaufortiodes – a young plant which flowered well for the first time in 1999.

Eremea violacea and *Eremea pauciflora* have been tried without success.

Regelia purpurea and *Regelia inops* were lost during a drought period.

Beaufortia schaueri did not survive the drought period.

Beaufortia 'Razzle Dazzle' – is growing and flowering well . Its parentage is unknown but it is a compact shrub.

Beaufortia incana – 9 years old and growing and flowering quite well.

Conothamnus aureus – is 8 years old but has grown very little and has never flowered.

Kunzea baxteri – 2 plants which get frosted during heavy frosts but recover to produce some flowers each year .

Kunzea pulchella – 2 plants – the one in the more open position flowers more heavily than the other.

Kunzea aff. *jucunda*? - flowers well each year.

Kunzea pomifera – covers several square metres and flowers well .

Kunzea parviflora – unthrifty and does not flower.

Kunzea ericoides – a number of plants of this species are growing close together and forming a dense hedge. They flower prolifically each year.

Kunzea opposita – a young plant which is growing well.

Kunzea ambigua (prostrate) – a young plant which has not yet flowered.

Kunzea ericifolia – 2 plants, 6 years old, which have grown to 2 metres but have never flowered..

Kunzea muelleri – 2 plants , 6 years old, which have grown fairly well but have not flowered.

Charles Loxley of Willmot in N.S.W. advises that he has a very good specimen of *Callistemon pinifolius* which flowers for a fairly long period of the year and is a deep red colour. This plant is currently some 2 metres in height.

Liesbeth Uijtewaal of Holland grows many Australian plants in containers . She has advised that one of her *Melaleuca squamea* plants flowered last year at 7 months of age and is bud again (April 2000). The *Callistemon salignus* she has growing is now 6 years old and is in bud again after flowering in 1998 but not last year. Liesbeth has forwarded a list of the 200 or so plants she is growing and which covers a wide range of Australian genera . Apparently the plants are grown in open areas during summer and moved to hothouses during winter which must be quite a feat.

Andrew Wilson of San Diego in California U.S.A. has been a member of the *Calothamnus* Study Group for a number of years. Andrew's garden is not on flat land and the soils vary considerably through sand to sand overlying clay to sandy loam overlying deep sand or overlying clay. In general, the soils can be difficult to re-wet if allowed to dry out . Frosts down to - 1 degree Celsius are experienced every few years but , in general, minimum temperatures are around 5 degrees Celsius. Fertilisers are not used. Drainage conditions are good to very good. The average rainfall is around 250 mm per year and is of winter incidence. The elevation of the property ranges from 70 to 150 metres ASL. Geographic location is 33N, 117W. Most of the garden faces north. Prevailing winds are either westerly from the ocean with humidity of around 50% to 75% or are hotter and drier winds from the east, usually during autumn and winter, when humidity can drop to as low as 5%.

A list of the plants being grown by Andrew is given below :

Melaleuca glomerata ; *spathulata* ; *laterita* ; *fulgens* ; *fulgens* var. *steadmanii* ; *thymifolia* ; *pulchella* ; *coccinea* ; *elliptica* ; *macronycha* ; *wilsonii* ; *leucadendra* ; *hypericifolia* ; *teretifolia* ; *scabra* ; *linariifolia* ; *gibbosa* ; *halmatorum* ; *leptospermoides* ? ; *diosmafolia* ; *suberosa* ; *huegelii* ; *violacea* .

Calothamnus pinifolius ; *homalophyllus* ; *sanguineus* ; *villosus* ; *aridus* .

Kunzea pulchella ; *baxteri* ; *ambigua* ; *pomifera*.

Regelia megacephala ; velutina.

Callistemon rigidus ; brachyandrus ; polandii ; comboynensis ; specious ; phoeniceus ; cirtinus ; viminalis plus a few cultivars.

Beaufortia sparsa.

SEED LIST

The following seed has been added to the seed bank . Seed is available free of charge to members and there is no restriction on the amount of seed which can be requested.

Calothamnus asper ; chrysantherus ; gilesii ; quadrifidus ; rupestris ; sanguineus ; validus ; villosus.

Regelia cymbifolia ; inops ; velutina

Phymatocarpus maxwellii

Melaleuca coccinea ; calycina ssp. dempta ; sp. aff. globifera ; macronycha ; nodosa ; quinquenervia (red form) ; scabra ; thymifolia ; thymoides ; tricophylla

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees fell due on July 1 2000 for the ensuing year. Membership fees will remain at \$AUS5.00 for Australian membership and at \$AUS12.00 for overseas membership. Application for membership forms are being forwarded to those members who have not yet paid their membership.

STUDY GROUP REPORT

Copies of the study group report are still available at a cost of \$10.00 which includes the cost of postage

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
Balance at 31-12-99	\$509.02	Petty cash	\$46.80
Membership fees & sales		Photocopy NL. 19	\$37.50
of study report	\$ 57.00	Postage NL. 19	\$36.00
Balance of Calothamnus		Purchase of seed	\$182.09
Study Group account	\$488.53	Photocopy study	
Bank interest	<u>\$1.23</u>	group report	\$54.45
Total	\$1055.78	Postage	\$9.65

Less expenditure	<u>\$368.89</u>	GDT	<u>\$2.40</u>
		Total	\$368.89
	Total		\$686.89
Balance as per bank statement 12-06 2000		\$686.89	

SLIDE SETS

Slide sets with written commentary of 125 species of Melaleuca, 119 species of Callistemon and 40 species of Leptospermum are available for loan to groups or individuals. The study group will pay the outward postage and the recipient is expected to pay the return postage. Should you require to borrow any of these slide sets please let me know.

MORE MELALEUCA OF NORTHERN AUSTRALIA

Melaleuca cheelii :

A shrub or small tree growing to a height of some 6 metres with papery bark. It grows in coastal heathland in sandy soils which can be waterlogged during the summer wet season and which often remain wet for the rest of the year. Leaves are opposite and 6-10 mm long by 2-5 mm wide. Flowers are white to creamy-white and are produced as a terminal spike. This plant is restricted to a small area in the Wide Bay District of Qld , mainly in the Bundaberg- Maryborough area.

Some years ago this plant was available in nurseries in this area but it is difficult to obtain now probably because it is generally difficult to grow away from its natural habitat.

Melaleuca glomerata

A shrub to 8 metres with papery bark and which often grows in dense thickets in the dry areas of Western Australia, western and southern Northern Territory, northern South Australia and western New South Wales. Leaves are 10-50 mm long by 1-4 mm wide. The inflorescence, which may be white or cream to yellow, may vary from a few to many flowered and may be produced either as a terminal or axillary head.

This plant is not often seen in cultivation but it is suspected that it could be useful in reclamation of saline areas. Some of its natural habitat may be seasonally inundated and some areas give the impression of being slightly saline.

Melaleuca saligna

A tree to 10 metres high and with papery bark. Leaves are scattered on the plant and range in size from 30-105 mm long by 4-18 mm wide. The inflorescence is many flowered and may be either axillary or terminal. Flowers are white. This plant is usually found in swampy areas along river banks in coastal areas of north Queensland.

So far as is known this plant is uncommon in cultivation but it may be useful in wet areas or, because of its graceful habit, may be useful in park plantings.

Melaleuca lasiandra

This plant is usually a large shrub to 8 metres high with papery bark. Leaves are scattered and range in size from 12-50 mm long by 2-7 mm wide with a poorly defined petiole. The inflorescence is an open many flowered terminal spike, white in colour. This plant usually grows in sand in low-lying areas in rocky gullies in dry areas in the Kimberley area of Western Australia, the Northern Territory and western Queensland.

This plant is used to a small extent in cultivation in northern areas and should be suitable for frost free areas further south.

Regards for now and good gardening



Col Cornford