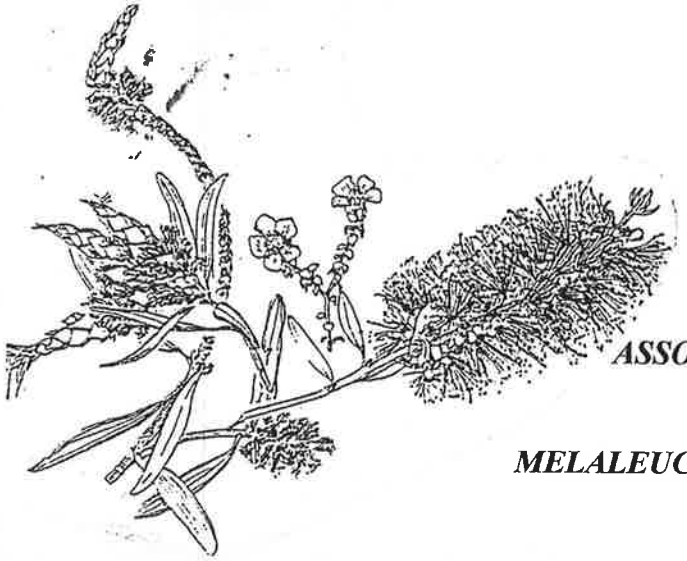

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ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

MELALEUCA AND ALLIED GENERA STUDY GROUP

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NEWSLETTER NO.26 June 2003

Dear Members,

Greetings to all and I hope that many of you have had good rainfalls over the past few months. Verna and I had a trip to Melbourne during April travelling via Lightning Ridge and Walgett to Orange, where we spent a few days with friends, and then on to Albury and Wagga Wagga before spending a very enjoyable day with Allan and Barbara Buchanan at Myrrhee and then on to Melbourne . We had a tour of Allan and Barbara's garden in heavy rain but, as they needed the rain, there were no complaints. Barbara's garden , which covers a large area, is among natural trees and trees which have been planted. Quite a few of the plants are in raised beds . There is a large range of plants from dry to semi-dry areas and including quite a few plants from Western Australia with most of them growing quite well. Because of the time of the year there was not much in flower at the time of our visit. It would be a nice garden to visit during flowering time . During our time in Melbourne we spent a few days at Metung, near Lakes Entrance , and a few days at Bright in the Victorian high country . The devastation caused by the fires earlier in the year had to be seen to be believed but it was good to see that there was a considerable amount of regeneration coming away from the base of many of the trees and shrubs which had been severely burnt . Most of the tree fern and other fern species were showing considerable regrowth. Unfortunately, there are some areas where the heat of the fires was so intense that many of the trees and shrubs were so badly burnt that the bark is dead and peeling off . Some of these may sprout from the base but it appears that much of the regeneration may have to come from seedling regrowth. On the way home we spent a very enjoyable time with Paul and Barbara Kennedy at Strathmerton , north of Shepparton near the Victoria/New South Wales border. Paul and Barbara's property is extremely drought stricken -- 200 mm of rain in 2002 and 75 mm of rain to the end of April 2003 . Their garden contains a wide range of plants including nearly all the known *Hakea* species , most of the known *Callistemon* species, a large range of *Eucalyptus, Melaleuca, Leptospermum* and *Correa* species as well as a number of Acacias and species from other genera. Despite the dry conditions the plants looked quite good with a number of *Hakea* and *Banksia* species in flower

Back at home here we received 200 mm of rain in February and have been getting reasonable showers since then which has kept the plants growing well Since February many of the Callistemons have been flowering sporadically outside their normal flowering period . At present there are flowers , with more buds coming , on *C.* . " *Dainty Lady* " , *C..comboynensis* , *C.* " *Glasshouse Gem*" , *C.* " *Glasshouse Snowball* " , *C. viminalis* and *C. pearsonii* with quite a few others coming into bud. *Leptospermum* " *Aussie Blossom* " " *Martin* " has been flowering since early April and is still producing a substantial number of buds. At present it is about 0.5 metres high with a spread of about 1 metre. It has been lightly tip-pruned a few times since it was planted 2 years ago. *Melaleuca trichostachya* flowered heavily earlier in the year and is currently carrying a light crop of flowers .

I have noticed quite a few *C. polandii*i coming into flower around Brisbane . The *Melaleuca bracteata* next door is carrying a fairly heavy crop of flowers at present. The *Melaleuca leucadendra* trees planted as street trees , both the narrow-leaved and broad-leaved forms , flowered following the rain in February and have been flowering sporadically since then . *M. leucadendra* should be used more widely as a street tree and in carparks as it maintains good shape without need for excessive pruning , it is always green and gives good shade, it will grow successfully in a wide range of soil and moisture conditions and it flowers heavily for a fairly long period each year, sometimes 3 or 4 times per year . It is a good food source for nectar–feeding birds and insects and it is quite highly perfumed although some people find the perfume to be overpowering . The Callistemons, Melaleucas, Grevilleas and other species we planted in our daughters garden about this time last year have grown well, despite being in a heavy clay soil which we thought may restrict their growth , and have flowered fairly consistently throughout the year. Two plants of the *Leptospermum* " *Aussie Blossom* " series in the same garden - " Martin " (white to pale pink) and " Naoko " (dark pink to red) - receive more sun than the plant in our garden and are flowering really well .

A NEW MELALEUCA

A new species of Melaleuca has been discovered in the Megalong Valley within the Blue Mountains of New South Wales. I don't know a great deal about it at this stage except that it is multi-stemmed from ground level, grows to about 5 metres high and produces magenta pink flowers in late spring/early summer . It will eventually be given a specific name but, at present , it is being known as *M.* " *Megalong Valley* " . I have a small stock of seed of this species in the seed bank and I can make some of this available to any member who may like to try to grow it . I planted seed of it here and got good germination within 4 days but, unfortunately , something, probably a cane toad, knocked the pot of seedlings off the bench with the result that most of the seedlings were damaged , although some may survive . A second planting of seed gave similar speedy results to the first lot even though the weather had cooled down considerably . All that remains now is to see whether or not I can grow them on to flowering stage !!!

SEED LIST

The following seed has been added to the seed list :

Melaleuca eximia - 2-2.5 metres high - red flowers
Melaleuca bromeloides - 1 metre high - white flowers
Melaleuca glena - 2-3 metres high - purple flowers
~~Melaleuca smartiorum~~ (previously M. holosericea) - 1 metre high - pink to mauve flowers
~~Melaleuca rigidifolia~~ - 1 metre high and spreading - pink flowers
Melaleuca " Cape Le Grande " - details not known
~~Melaleuca tuberculata spp macrophylla~~ (previously M. cuneata) - 1 metre high - pink flowers

Thanks to the Esperance Wildflower Society , Western Australia for supply of this seed. .

MEMBERS REPORTS

Byron Williams , Kew Victoria advises that , in the process of searching the web he came across the following information relating to a Callistemon released in USA by San Marcos Growers - " A Koala Blooms University of Santa Cruz 2002 Plant Introduction " - Callistemon

CALLISTEMON " Canes Hybrid "

An ornamental evergreen shrub or small tree (10 ft x 5-6 ft) with pastel pink bottlebrush flowers . Narrow grey green leaves with arching branches. Young foliage is soft and tinged with pink. Drought tolerant once established, responsive to pruning and frost hardy down to 20oF. It reads as though it may be quite a nice plant

Byron also advises that his *C. " Hinchinbrook "* and *C. " Jenny Wren "* are presently heavy in bud and should flower well in August. Byron also has plants of *C. phoeniceus* cultivars - " North Kalgoorlie ", Lake Johnston" and "Yalgoo " which, although small at this stage, are doing well. It will be interesting to follow the growth of these in future years. Seed of *C. " Mount Mee "* was obtained from the seed bank some time ago but all the plants resulting from this seed have different leaves. (Editors note - *C. " Mount Mee "* in its natural habitat bears some resemblance to *C. pachyphyllus.*) Plants from the seed of *C. " Malawi Giant "* , from the late Derrick Arnall's property in Malawi , have proved to be hardy under frost conditions Byron's wife recently spent some time in Japan and was pleased to see a large red-flowered Callistemon in a large pot on the verandah of a Japanese house . (Editors note - There is a Japanese gardener in Yokohama, Japan - Alex (Akiro) Endo - who developed a love for Australian

plants during a 5 year stay in Melbourne and who now grows a wide range of Australian plants in Japan . Views of his garden may be accessed via the Global Garden website at www.global-garden.com.au or at his own website - www.geocities.co.jp/SweetHome-Brown/1908/index.e.html or he can be contacted at e-mail - mailto:alex@kf.caly.ne.jp)

Paul Kennedy has forwarded a list of the Leptospermum species he is growing . Most of these are 3 years old and are up to 1.5 metres high . They have not been affected by frosts down to –4oC. Some of the Leptospermum species have been planted around the pool fence as they tend to grow upright and are easily pruned to create a hedge effect and to act as a windbreak. All are in deep sand and all have done well . Species in this area are - *L brevipes, L. rotundifolium, L. turbinatum, L. grandiflorum, L. lanigerum* and *L. scoparium* .

Leptospermums being grown in sandy loam are - *L leavigatum, L. speciosum, L. spinescens, L. nitidum* and *L sericeum.*

L. liversidgei and *L. brachyandrum* are being grown in clay loam while *L. obovatum* is being grown in heavy clay

Liesbeth Uijtewaal writes from Holland that she has the first flowers on her *Leptospermum venustum* - the centre of the flower is white with the outer edges of the petals being a soft pink. (Editors note - *L. venustum* grows in a restricted area near Eidsvold in central Queensland on granitic hillsides or slopes often close to small watercourses. It generally grows to a height of 1.5 --2.5 metres with arching branches. I have tried it here on 2 occasions but , so far, without success) . *L. macrocarpum x L. spectabile* has produced lots of flowers as has *Calothamnus quadrifidus* A plant which was supposed to be *Calothamnus sanguineus* has flowered and turned out to be *C. quadrifidus* . *Calothamnus villosus* has also flowered well

Members reports have been a bit light on this past 6 months or so . If you have any information which you think could be of interest to other members about any species within any of the subject genera please send it in .

VALE – IVAN TILEY

I regret to advise of the passing of Ivan Tiley . Ivan was a member of the study group when I took over the leadership in 1990 and remained an enthusiastic member until his death. He lived on a property known as " Buln Gherin " (aboriginal for Black Cockatoo) , near the town of Beaufort towards the western side of Victoria and not far from The Grampians , the property on which one of the first , if not the first , Australian plant gardens was established in Victoria . Ivan was enthusiastic about Melaleuca species with one of his favourites being *M. coccinea* . Over the years he has corresponded regularly with updates of the plants in his garden . Our thoughts are with his wife, Jean , and family.

KUNZEA POMIFERA (Common name – Munthari or Muntries)

Amidst the Australian food plants, Munthari is one of the special few that can leave a lasting impression . With the alluring apple-like smell of ripening fruit in late summer and the vast carpeting nature of it's dark green foliage topped with white blossom in spring it is a refreshing sight.

Munthari or *Kunzea pomifera* can be found growing along the south-east coast of Australia, on Kangaroo Island, some areas of Yorke Peninsula in South Australia and in inland mallee regions of South Australia. It also occurs in western coastal districts of Victoria . It was a favourite food of aboriginals and early European settlers and is gaining popularity as its flavour is re-discovered by chefs and food processors. The fruit has the appearance of small apples with an apple-like flavour but without the acidity of apples . They may be eaten fresh or used in a variety of prepared foods such as jams , chutneys etc

The plant prefers well drained sandy soils over limestone and its habitat is shared with *Banksia, Billardiera, Xanthorrea* and *Eucalyptus* species . For home gardeners a rockery is an ideal place to grow this plant . They can be grown in full sun to dappled shade with ample water. Trial plantings have found no evidence to suggest that larger fruits are produced in shaded situations although shade may prevent drying out of the fruit and prevent wind damage. . Heavy soils retard plant growth as they prefer light well-drained soils . It has also been found the lack of alkalinity produces little or no fruit. Plants are moderately tolerant to frosts and are moderately drought hardy .

HOMORANTHUS FLAVESCENS

The genus Homoranthus belongs to the Myrtaceae family and contains about 19 species. One of the fairly spectacular members of the genus is *Homoroanthus flavescens* . The name Homoranthus derives from the Greek – homos meaning same and anthos – meaning flower. The specific epithet derives from the Latin and means yellow. The foliage of this plant is unusual and distinctive . Silver to blue-grey leaves are crowded on the upper side of the spreading horizontal branches . Some forms have a reddish tinge to the foliage . Leaves are three-sided to cylindrical about 10-15 mm long by 1 mm wide ...Branching occurs freely at the ends of the stems which provides overlapping layers of foliage both at the centre of the plant and at the extremities of the plant . The result is a symmetrical, almost spreading semi-prostrate habit.

During winter, flower buds develop in the leaf axils near the ends of the branches. Flowering occurs in late spring or early summer , usually between November and February. The individual flowers are quite small but highlight the branches with a touch of yellow. The flowers produce an unusual scent , sometimes described as a mixture of mouse and honey.

Propagation has been carried out using new spring or summer wood as it apparently does not readily set seed . *Homoranthus flavescens* appears to grow best in diffused light situations as the most attractive plants are found in semi-shaded situations . In full sun leaf fall occurs which gives the plant a sparse appearance. When grown in a well-drained situation this plant will probably persist for a number of years . Because most of the vegetative shoots are located towards the ends of the branches ,the plant is unlikely to respond to severe pruning . This plant is well-suited to sheltered positions as an undershrub to taller trees

(Editors note - Good specimens of this plant can be seen along the sides of the road which leads to the top of Mount Kaputar , near Narribri, in New South Wales . Plants in this area are up to 1.2 metres high with a spread of some 3 metres and are usually in full flower in September /October. The bright yellow flowers and grey foliage combine to present an attractive shrub . A relative of this species, *Homoranthus virgatus* with similar grey foliage and paler yellow flowers , was readily available in nurseries in this area some years ago but is now rarely seen).

DARWINIA CARNEA

The Darwinia genus contains about 35 species , all of them endemic to Australia. The genus belongs to the family- Myrtaceae with their closest relatives being Verticordia, Homoranthus and Chamelaucium

Darwinia carnea is known from only a few locations in south-west Western Australia and is considered to be on the verge of extinction in its natural habitat. However, it is fairly well known in cultivation despite being rare in the wild .

Darwinia carnea is one of the " bell-flowered " members of the genus and the only one of its type to occur outside the Stirling Ranges near Albany on the south coast. The small flowers are enclosed within large bracts which give a bell shape to the flower . The bell shaped bracts are usually green in colour but may be reddish. D. carnea is a small shrub to a height of about 0.5 metres with similar spread and with linear leaves up to 15 mm long . For best results this plant requires excellent drainage and some protection from harsh sunlight.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees for 2003/2004 will remain at $AU 5.00 for Australian members and $AU 12.00 for overseas members. If there is no " Application for Membership " form attached to your newsletter it indicates that your membership is up to date.

CULTIVARS

Listed below are a few of the lesser known cultivars within the Myrtaceae family . I am not sure whether or not these may be still available on the market but it is probably worth keeping an eye open for them .

Melaleuca " Ulladulla Beacon "

Melaleuca " Ulladulla Beacon " is a low growing form of Melaleuca hypericifolia which was selected from a wild population on the coastal headlsnds near Ulladulla in New South Wales. It grows from 0.3 to 0.6 metres high with a spread of 1 to 2 metres . Bright orange-red flowers , with dark grey anthers , are produced in spring and summer

Callistemon " Country Sprite "

Callistemon " Country Sprite " is a seedling of Callistemon " Glasshouse Country " (an F2 hybrid of C. recurvus X C. salignus) . It was selected from a batch of seedlings from the garden of Mrs E.J. Morgan , Glasshouse Mountains , Qld . It grows as a fairly open shrub to a height of 4 – 5 metres . New growth is coppery pink . Pink, moderately open to relatively dense flowers are seen in spring and summer.

Callistemon " Sallyann "

Callistemon " Sallyannn " is a pink flowered form of Callistemon paludosus which originated in Victoria . This shrub grows to a height of 3 to 4 metres with a spread of 2 to 3 metres and with pendulous branches . Bright pink flowers are seen during late spring through summer to early autumn. The clear pink flowers of C. " Sallyann " are much brighter than the " duller " pink flowers of other pink-flowered forms of C. paludosus

Callistemon " Bob Bailey "

Callistemon " Bob Bailey " arose from a batch of seedlings from seed collected from a plant of C. viminalis growing in the grounds of Heatley State Primary School in Townsville , Qld. and was named after Mr Robert Bailey , a principal of Heatley School , who had given his whole career to teaching in the area. C. " Bob Bailey resembles C. viminalis in form and grows to a height of about 5 metres with a spread of 3 metres. The difference between this cultivar and the typical form is in the flower spikes where flowers are more densely arranged , flower spikes are longer and wider (100 – 160 mm by 60 mm) and the colour of the filaments are pink rather than the red of the typical form . Flowering occurs during late winter through spring.

Callistemon " Wooloomin Sparkler "

Callistemon " Wooloomin Sparkler " was raised from seed collected from a pink form of C. salignus and is , possibly, a hybrid between this and C. " Harkness " or less likely C citrinus. It is a medium-sized shrub to a height of 3 metres with a spread of 2 metres with compact habit and dense foliage . Red flowers are borne in spikes clustered near the ends of branches . The anthers are yellow. Flower spikes are about 80 mm long by 60 mm diameter but flower spikes up to 120 mm long have been reported.(maybe this is a heritage of a C. " Harkness " parentage) Flowering occurs in September/ October and again in March/April

Leptospermum " Lemon Frost "

Leptospermum " Lemon Frost " arose from a batch of seed from L. petersonii and is presumed to be a hybrid between L. petersonii and one of the forms of L. polygalifolium . This shrub grows to a height of about 2 metres with a spread of 1.5 metres . Leaves are bright green , dense , sparsely hairy when young but becoming glabrous with conspicuous oil glands which produce a lemon scent. Solitary white flowers , about 20 mm in diameter , are produced during late spring to early summer.

Leptospermum " Raelene "

Leptospermum " Raelene " arose from a batch of seedlings of Leptospermum laevigatum in Victoria . The main difference between this cultivar and the typical form is that the leaves are slightly smaller and are variegated . New growth is light green margined with yellow/cream . As the growth matures the green becomes darker and the yellow/cream margins turn bright pink. Flower colour is white as for the typical form.

Babingtonia " Wirreanda White Cascade "

Babingtonia (previously Baeckea) " Wirreanda White Cascade " arose as a chance seedling from a batch of seedlings of Baeckea virgata . This plant is a dense, low spreading shrub to a height of 0.5 metres with a spread of up to 1.5 metres. Branchlets are pendulous with coppery-coloured new growth. Small clusters of small white flowers are produced during summer and autumn .

LEPTOSPERMUM SLIDE SET

The Leptospermum slide set is being expanded to include slides of Darwinia, Micromyrtus, Homoranthus , Verticordia, Neofabricea, Thryptomene , Beaufortia, Eremea, Phymatocarpus , Regelia and Calothamnus slides and will be known in future as " **Leptospermum and Associated Genera slides** " As with the other slide sets , Callistemon and Melaleuca , it will be available for loan to groups or individuals.

LEPTOSPERMUM SPECIES FROM NORTHERN AUSTRALIA AND BEYOND

Some brief descriptions of a few Leptospermum species from northern Australia and the islands to the north of Australia :

Leptospermum lamellatum - a shrub to 3 metres or a small tree to 5 metres with the bark of main stems in many, often reddish , papery layers with the younger stems being slender and silky-pubescent at first. , later decreasing . Branches are usually attached to the main trunk at an angle of 30o to 45o. Leaves are 10 to 14 mm long by 1.5 to 4 mm wide , often grey-green owing to a dense silky pubescence , sometimes later green with a few hairs remaining . Flowers are white to a diameter of 5 to 13 mm in diameter and usually produced singly or in pairs. This plant is fairly common in inland central Qld where it is usually found in sandy soils in woodland or among rocks , often along watercourses , and especially associated with sandstone .

Leptospermum wooroonooran - grows on the high granite mountains of far northern Qld in wet , cloudy sites on exposed rock outcrops or among rocks of stream-banks. It usually exhibits as a dwarfed tree , often with horizontal trunk , with persistent flaky, fibrous bark. Leaves are usually 15 to 20 mm long by 3 to 7 mm wide , silky when young . Flowers are white to a diameter of 12 to 20 mm and are produced singly on modified shoots.

Leptospermum recurvum - found at an altitude of 7000-8500 feet on Mount Kinabalu in Borneo and on the highest mountains of Sulawesi , in shallow soils , in dense shrubland or low forest. It can be a small shrub, small tree or tree to 20 metres with persistent flaky pale bark . Leaves , which may vary considerably in shape , size and pubescence are , on average , 3 to 6 mm long by 2 to 3 mm wide . Flowers, to 12 mm diameter , are produced singly on modified shoots in upper leaf axils and on short axillary branches .

Leptospermum parviflorum - is found from New Guinea through the north-east and eastern side of Cape York in Qld to the northern part of the Northern Territory to the Bungle Bungle Ranges in the Kimberley region of Western Australia. It is usually found on stream banks and on deep river sands. It is often a multi-stemmed shrub or small tree to a height of 6 metres., with bark seasonally exfoliating to expose a smooth shining and often purplish surface below.. Leaves are 2 to 7 mm long by 2 to 10 mm (or more) wide . Flowers may be white or cream , 2 to 7 mm in diameter , usually occurring several together (up to 6) at the ends of branches.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

Receipts		Expenditure	
Balance at 9 – 12 – 02	$823.88	Photocopy NL 25	$ 49 . 00
Membership fees	$ 70 . 00	Postage NL 25	$ 49 . 70
Bank Interest	$1 . 70	Printer ink and paper	$42 . 72
		Petty cash	$29 . 70
Total	$ 845 . 58	Reg. Post - slides and stamps	$19 . 85
		Reg. Post – slides	$ 14 . 65
Less expenditure	$207 . 72	GDT	$2 . 10
	$687 . 86	Total	$ 207 . 72

Balance as per bank statement – 9 –6 – 03 $687 . 86

Keep those reports coming in .

Until next time

Regards and good gardening

Col Cornford

P.S. I had hoped to get this newsletter out in June but a few medical problems slowed me down for a while .

Regards

C.C.