

*ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING
AUSTRALIAN PLANTS*

MELALEUCA AND ALLIED GENERA STUDY GROUP

ABN : 56 654 053 676

Leader : Colin Cornford

16 Eldorado Street

Bracken Ridge Qld

4017 Australia

Phone : 07-32698256

e-mail : colincornford@bigpond.com

NEWSLETTER NO : 32 June 2006

Dear Members.

*It is dry here and there does not seem to be much prospect of it getting wetter in the near future . We had enough rain to keep us going during summer and early autumn but we have had very little rain since the end of April and that , coupled with watering restrictions imposed by the local Council and very low humidity , has resulted in gardens starting to suffer from lack of water. We have managed to keep our garden going fairly well to date but the introduction of tougher restrictions this month may , unless we get some decent rainfall , see us start to lose a few plants . We are now restricted to watering with a bucket only so we will have to concentrate on the plants we want to save such as the Angiopteris and Marrattia ferns (which we have had growing for about 20 years and which have fronds up to 5 metres long) plus other ferns and a number of unusual plants(*Triplarena pallescens* , *Hemigenia biddulphiana* , *Callistemon pauciflorus* , an unnamed *Hibiscus* which grows only 300 mm high with bright red flowers up to 100 mm diameter and a number of species of Tassel fern from the genus *Huperzia* and other genera are some which come to mind which we have managed to obtain and get to grow over a period of years .*

*Most of the *Callistemons* flowered on for quite a lot longer than usual this year . Some of them were still in flower in early autumn . The *Melaleuca viridiflora* plants produced up to 4 lots of flowers and there is still an occasional flower on some of them now. . *Callistemon comboynensis* is flowering well at present and there have been a few unseasonal flowers on *Callistemon* “ Glasshouse Gem “ , Glasshouse Country “ , *C. recurvus* and *C. viminalis* to name a few . *Callistemon* “ Injune “ flowered very heavily this year with flowers holding their colour for a slightly longer period than usual. They normally fade to white from their mid-pink within a day or two of opening. For some unknown reason , *Melaleuca linariifolia*, in both their natural habitat and in gardens , flowered very poorly this year with just a few groups of flowers here and there on some plants during their normal flowering period of January / February. *Melaleuca bracteata* and *M. stypheloides* were other species which did not flower well this year. I am still waiting for our *Melaleuca teretifolia* to producing a flower or two this year !!! . The weeping burgundy form of *M. viridiflora* , a medium-sized tree to about 5 metres with thick papery bark and weeping foliage , flowered 3 times this year whereas it usually flowers only once. Flowers on this form are more open and slightly longer than those produced on the red, green or cream flowering forms .*

MEMBERS REPORTS

There is a request by **Andrew Wilson** from California for information about *Callistemon phoeniceus*. Andrew has plants of this species which he grew from seed obtained through the West Australian Wildflower Society. The seed was reputed to have been obtained from a population growing in a salt basin in South Australia. These plants have grown exceptionally well – in areas where the soil is shallow they have remained at a height of about 1.5 metres but in the deeper soils they have reached heights of up to 5 metres with similar spread. Flowering is always regular and spectacular. Andrew wants to know if anyone knows of where seed of this tall-growing species may be available, if it is different to the normal species, or a cultivar as the case may be, as he has only seen advertisements for seed of species growing to less than 2 metres. (Editors Note – *C. phoeniceus* grows fairly well in Brisbane but rarely produces more than a few flowers during flowering season. The pink form (sold under the name of *C. "Pink Ice"*) generally flowers better in Brisbane than the red form but it seems to stay at a height of about 1.5 metres. I have seen plants of the red flowering form of this species at Myall Park Botanic Gardens, Glenmorgan (developed by the late David Gordon and from where Grev. "Robyn Gordon" originated) which are about 4 metres high with a spread of 5 to 6 metres which were flowering very heavily. I have always had the impression that a height of about 3 to 4 metres was normal for this species). If anyone has any information on variable growth habits of this species please let me know so I can pass it on to Andrew.

Andrew advises they had a strange springtime this year – it came twice. The first occurred at the start of the year with clear skies and no moisture in the soil. Australian plants flowered in a half-hearted way. Rain came in April which is normally the time when the weather would be getting warmer and the rains would be finished. This late rain sparked a flush of flowering – *M. spathulata* was quite spectacular, *M. citrina* flowered well and the local *C. viminalis* seedlings, possibly a cross with *C. citrinus*, which have appeared spontaneously in the garden flowered exceptionally well. *Verticordias* flowered well after a slow start. The most spectacular of all was *M. leptospermoides* which spreads wide and low and becomes absolutely covered in flowers. Mallee Eucalypts like *E. tetraptera* flowered extremely well also.

Jeff Irons advised early in the year that southern England was experiencing severe drought conditions and recent reports would indicate that these conditions still exist. A sudden out of season frost was experienced in November on Wirral, where Jeff lives, when plants were growing strongly. The spring flowering ones had not formed a thick cuticle on their buds and these buds were killed outright. One of the *Melaleuca* "Megalong Valley" plants had a few leaf tips browned but suffered no other damage.

DROUGHT TOLERANCE

As many parts of Australia have been suffering drought conditions for some time I thought it appropriate that we try to determine the drought tolerance of the Australian plant species being grown in gardens. It would be appreciated if you could give some thought to this and let me have your comments on the drought tolerance of any of the species you are growing from any of the genera covered by this study group.

EUCALYPTUS RUST

Copy of an article on *Eucalyptus rust* which has become established in Central and South America, the Caribbean, South Florida and the Hawaiian Islands is attached. It is expected that the rust will become established in Africa in the near future. The disease affects many species of the Myrtaceae family including *Eucalyptus*, *Callistemon*, *Melaleuca* and *Syzygium*. Let us hope that it never gets here as it has the potential to devastate our *Eucalyptus* forests and many gardens which contain many species from the susceptible genera. It could also wreak havoc among the wetland forests which contain many *Melaleuca* species and among many of the Myrtaceae species which occur in rain forests.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Membership fees are due on July 1. Application for membership form is attached if your membership is due. Fees for 2006/2007 will remain at \$Au5.00 for Australian membership and \$Au12.00 for overseas membership.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT

The current financial position of the study group is as follows :

<u>Receipts</u>		<u>Expenditure</u>	
Balance as at 5/12/05	\$606.09	Printer Ink	\$97.88
Membership	\$10.00	Postage - NL 31	\$39.00
Bank Interest	\$2.10	Registered Post	\$23.15
Total	\$618.19	Petty Cash	\$26.00
Less expenses	\$226.89	PettyCash(printNL31)	\$25.00
		Seed	\$14.41
		Total	\$226.89
	Total		
	\$392.75		
Balance as per Bank Statement - 05/06/06		\$392.75	

I realise this is a short newsletter but I hope you enjoy it. Do not hesitate to send any information you may have on species from any of the genera covered by this group to me for inclusion in the newsletter.

Regards for now and good gardening

Col Cornford

A current seed list is attached . Seed is available free of charge to all members with no limit on the number of species for which seed may be requested at any one time.

SEED LIST JUNE 2006

MELALEUCA

accuminata	minutifolia	Endeavour "	Pacific Beauty "
adnata	nematophylla	flavo-virens	parvifolium
alternifolia	nervosa	Guyra Hybrid "	polygalifolium
arcana	nesophila	lineariifolius	riparium
argentea	nodosa	linearis	rotundifolium
armillaris	palescens	Mr. Foster "	rupestre
bracteata	pauperiflora	Mrs Foetel "	scoparium (SW Tas)
brevifolia	pentagona	pachyphyllus (green)	semibaccatum
bromeloides	pulchella	pachyphyllus (red)	speciosum
calycina	pungens	pallidus	spectabile " Rhiannon "
cardiophylla	quinquenervia	pearsonii	spinescens
citrina	radula	phoeniceus	squarrosum
coccinea	rhaphiophylla	pinifolius (red)	
conothamnoides	sapientes	pinifolius (green)	CALOTHAMNUS
cordata	scabra	pityoides	asper
cornucopia	scabra (tall form)	polandii	chrysantherus
cuticularis	scabra (dual colour)	polandii (broad-leaved form)	gilesii
dealbata	sieberi	polandii (Pyramid form)	quadrifidus
decora	sp.aff. cornucopia	recurvus	rupestre
decussata	sp. aff. globifera	rigidus	sanguineus
densa	spicigera	rugulosus	vallidus
diosmafolia	squamea	salignus (white)	villosus
diosmatifolia	striata	shiresii	
eleuterostachya	stypeloides	sieberi	KUNZEA
elliptica	suberosa	sp. ex. Malawi	ambigua
ericifolia	subfalcata	sp	baxterii
fabri	systema	sp (red)	capitata
fulgens	tamariscina	sp " Mt Mee "	parvifolia
fulgena ssp corrugata	teretifolia	teretifolius	pomifera
gibbosa	thymifolia	viminalis " Malawi Giant)	recurva
glabberima	thymoides	violacea	
glomerata	thyoides		cymbifolia
halmatororum	tricophylla	LEPTOSPERMUM	inops
huegelii	tricostachya	arachnoides	velutina
huegelii (purple bud)	uncinata	continentale	
hypericifolia	undulata	coriaceum	PHYMATOCARPUS
incana	viminea	epacradoideum	maxwellii
lanceolata	violacea	erubescens	
laterita	viridiflora (red)	glaucescens	
laxiflora	viridiflora (burgundy	grandiflorum (grey leaf)	
leucadendra (broad - leaved form)	wilsonii	grandiflorum	
linariifolia		lanigerum	
linearifolia " Snowstorm "	CALLISTEMON	laevigatum	
linophylla	Adina "	luehmannii	
macronychia	brachyandrus	minutifolium	
megacephala	chisholmii	neglectum	
Megalong Valley "	citrinus	nitidum	
microphylla	comboynensis	obovatum	