

**S.G.A.P. ACACIA STUDY GROUP**  
**NEWSLETTER NO. 10**  
**JULY 1972**

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Just heard on radio we've had the wettest six months since 1890 something! Wish we could have sent some of the rain to our hard working famers and graziers who need it. Thank goodness winter is on its way out.

**MEMBERSHIP:** Good news for old members in particular, Mrs McHaffie has rejoined, and four new members are welcomed. Names and addresses as follows:

Currie, E	Frondd Drive, Monbulk, Victoria 3793
Dark, Mrs J	58 Emu Road, Glenbrook, NSW 2773
McHaffie, Mrs	Carawatha, Berringa Road, Park Orchards, Victoria 3114
Statham, Mrs C.M.	Botany Dept, University of Tasmania, GPO Box 2520, Hobart, Tasmania 7001
Wurr, H.J.	Coulter, Road, Henderson R.D.1., Auckland 8, New Zealand

Dr Ross Macdonald has changed his address to: 1 Balcombe Court, Croydon, Victoria 3136  
What a wrench – abandoning such a successful garden. But he cheerfully points out that it's a chance to re-plan, profiting from and avoiding earlier mistakes.

**FINANCE:** Sorry no room for details this time. Will make a full report in October. It looks as though we may finish up with a small surplus, in which case I propose spending a few dollars on seeds. If anyone doesn't approve of this please let me know.

**SEED LIST:** Following on he above you can also let me know of any particular seeds you want but I think most of these have already been noted by me and are prominent on the "wanted" list.

You may be interested to know that I wrote to Canberra Botanic Gardens recently, sent them a list of wanted seeds and offered to let them have any they might want from us. They were unable to supply a single seed of any of the species asked for and came back with a request for approximately 80 species from our list! I won't go into details of how I dealt with that. Sufficient to say that I provided some and told them where they could buy the others! They did, however, come to light with seeds of about half a dozen species which were not previously on our list and for this I have thanked them.

You will also be glad to know that I've been able to supply surplus seed to all State seed banks (except Victoria who did not accept the offer) and have received co-operation in return, especially from Mr Bill Tulloch of Queensland.

Referring to April N/L Mr Althofer advises that seed of *A. ligulata* in the bank is from a small flowered form from Menindie Lakes – showy and a perfect sand binder, but it is not the orange colour. Mrs Cook, could you please let us know about the seed you sent in.

Additions

*alpina* (few)  
*baeuerlenii* (few)  
*caesiella* (few)  
*cupularis* (few)  
*craspedocarpa*  
*fimbriata* var. *perangusta*  
*graffiana* (few)  
*havilandii*  
*holosericea*  
*X hubbardiana*  
*ixiophylla* (few)

*jucunda* (few)  
*kybeanensis*  
*lanigera* var. *mucronata*  
*linearifolia*  
*mucronata* var. *mucronata*  
*obliquinervia*  
*schinoides*  
*scirpifolia*  
*simsii* (few)  
*stenoptera*  
*tetragonophylla*  
*uncifera*

Deletions

*alata*  
*amblygona*  
*daviesioides*  
*drummondii* var. *major*  
*maidenii*  
*X plagiophylla*  
*shuttleworthii*  
*teretifolia*

The two with crosses represent a name change. *A. plagiophylla* has been changed to *A. hubbardiana*. We also have seed of an autumn flowering *A. pycnantha* with flowers somewhat paler than usual.

**PROSTRATE ACACIAS:** Many members enquire about these, and it seems there are several which are relatively unknown. Unfortunately, so far as I know, seed is unobtainable at present, but we can all keep our eyes and ears open and I hope that in a couple of years time we may have at least one or two.

*A. acinacea.* Native to SA, NSW, Vic. Normally a shrub with flat oblong phyllodes, 5-20mm long with a good showy florescence in deep yellow ball type flowers. Dr Macdonald and Mrs Cook both report what one might call "accidental" prostrate forms. We hope for seed later.

*A. aculeatissima.* Native to Victoria. Most of us are familiar with this one, and we have seed, thanks to Mesdames Perkins and Lyndon. It is usually a sparse little shrub with short spiny phyllodes about 1½ cm long and bright yellow flower balls. It's rather significant that all natural habitats reported to me have clay soil and that the three most successful growers, Mesdames Lyndon and Murphy and Dr Macdonald also have clay soil. Two of them actually live in an area where it grows naturally – Mrs Lyndon I'm not sure about ie whether it is found in Leongatha district or not. Vic Jacobs also has one doing well in a raised bed.

*A. amblygona.* Native to Queensland and NSW. Mr Althofer, in the Burrendong Arboretum Brigge (an aboriginal word meaning "messenger") says that some years ago near Miles in Queensland he found a prostrate form of this. It is normally a small shrub to about 1.5m with short curled phyllodes ending in a sharp point and cream ball type flowers.

*A. duriuscula.* This is another of Mr Althofer's finds but this one has been established at Burrendong and he hopes for a little seed this coming season. The plant comes from inland WA, has a very dense growth, with dull green phyllodes and small golden ball flowers in profusion. The plants at Burrendong have a diameter of 3 to 4m. With age the centre of the plant will build up to a height of about 60cm but the even flow of foliage over the ground is not broken.

*A. pravissima.* Native to Victoria and NSW. Normally a shrub or tree to about 4-5m. Phyllodes are a rather lovely deep green, almost triangular and the flowers deep yellow ball type in long racemes, making it a spectacular plant in bloom. Two members advise that nurseryman, Rodger Elliot of Victoria, has this plant for sale.

*A. spectabilis.* Native to Queensland and NSW. Normally a slender tree to 4 or 5 metres. Foliage is bipinnate, a beautiful blue-green and the flowers large, brilliant yellow in long racemes. The name speaks for itself. I have seen two plants of the prostrate form growing at Wurrimbirra, where they measure about 1.5 to 2m in diameter. They are quite beautiful, even without sign of bud or flower. I believe there is also a plant of this in the Canberra Botanic Gardens. I was lucky to be given 5 seeds myself. Four of these germinated and two are now planted into garden. Now 7 months old from seed each has only one branch about 20cm long but definitely has the prostrate habit. There should be seeds of this at a future date, either from Wurrimbirra or from mine.

**SICKNESS AND HEALTH:** I came across this the other day, in "The Australian Gardener's Guide to Pests and Diseases" by Pax Lindsay. "Some plants develop disorders when some chemical soil elements are absent or deficient. Acacias, for example, suffer from defoliation and die-back when boron is deficient. Most modern fertilizers contain all essential elements, but special compounds may be used in minute quantities. In the above case, a teaspoon of borax watered in to a square yard would correct the deficiency." Be sure to water well after application.

## MEMBERS' COMMENTS:

*A. boormanii.* Mrs Cumpston has one 2.4m high at about 7 years now beginning to look straggly, and enquires about pruning. We have the immediate answer from Mrs Perkins who reports that hers which was doing so well at about 3 years developed die-back on the main stem. After two prunings it now seems OK and the main stem is now about one third of its previous height. Both report that *A. boormanii* suckers and Mrs Cumpston has obtained new plants in this way. All who have reported on this species say it is reluctant to set seed in its early years. *A. boormanii* comes from East Gippsland in Victoria and should be tried by anyone who thinks they have a chance of success with it. Mrs Chandler reports three growing well and fully budded at Wurrimbirra.

*A. buxifolia.* A very showy shrubby acacia which occurs in NSW, Victoria and Queensland. Mrs Cumpston reports that it is native around Canberra but she finds it only lives a year or two in the garden. I raised and planted out four

some years ago but none did well and now all have departed this life. Am including it in the “homework” list to see if anyone has been successful.

*A. flexifolia*. Following on comments in April N/L Vic Jacobs reports his is also in shade. Useful to know as many acacias don't like it.

*A. howittii*. Five members grow this one. I didn't ask for reports on it because I can't hope to keep Group reports on all species, so for a start am concentrating on those not commonly grown, those known to be difficult and those of which I have no knowledge myself. However, Vic Jacobs had a difference of opinion over the question of the bark of *A. howittii*, so would anyone who grows or knows this tree please let me have appropriate comments.

*A. iteaphylla*. Mrs Chandler reports that this does very well at Wurrimbirra and is one of their best selling plants. I have three now 18 months old from seed. The best is 1.5m high, the other two about 1m. All seem OK in three totally different situations. It has very beautiful foliage so is always “lovely to look at” right through the year. Should be tried by everyone.

*A. rotundifolia*. Again further to April N/L Vic Jacobs reports having found this growing on rocky banks around Lake Epeloch near Bendigo. He goes on to say that it is not a graceful shrub there but hugs the ground and forms a conical shape. Another instance of adaptation to conditions.

*A. tayloriana*. This is native to WA, a shrub to about 1.5metres with light green delicate pinnate foliage. Dr Ross Macdonald, who provided seed, comments as follows:- “It has done very well here although very little grown. It is easy from seed, but better with fairly fresh seed even if not treated in any way. Flowers are palish yellow on long pedicels, single and showy. No pests attack it here and it is a most desirable shrub. Mine is in full sun, well drained and thriving. I have cut it back in the past but this year had to wait for seed collecting. It doesn't seem to mind either way.”

But now we come to the crunch:-

**HOMEWORK:** A Report Sheet is enclosed which should make life a little easier for you than last time. But PLEASE FILL IN ALL DETAILS. If you don't know the rainfall, please find out – that shouldn't be too difficult.

If you can't work out the metric system, get yourself a metric table – you're going to need it to cope with the ordinary chores of daily living.

There seems to be some misunderstanding about min-max temperature. The figures I want are the lowest the thermometer ever goes down to and the highest it ever reaches. If you can't manage centigrade, fahrenheit will get you a pass. Really I do agree, I find the metric system an absolute bind to get used to.

I've run out of space so the species on which I'd like you to report are listed on a separate sheet. If you have only a few of them, spread yourself out and use a couple of lines for each one. If you have too many to fit on one sheet, ask me for another. I guess most of you think this is an awful bore but it could be a lot worse in future. The Federal Council of SGAP consider that Study Groups should do a lot more research and recording. They're going to lay down “Guide Lines” as to how we should go about this, so we might as well get into training.

And that's all for now. NEXT NEWSLETTER AND COMPLETE NEW SEED LIST OCTOBER.