

S.G.A.P. ACACIA STUDY GROUP
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Dear Members

Acacias in flower in our garden at the moment include *Acacia rupicola*, *A. meisneri*, *A. subulata* and *A. retinodes*. A form of *A. lanuginosa* which flowers right through winter, has just commenced its season. What others do you have in flower in your garden at this time?

Please note that as John and I will be away on holiday from the end of May until late August or early September, there will not be another newsletter until October-November. Also apart from the holiday I will be going to Brisbane as a delegate to the SGAP Conference at the end of September. Usually advantage is taken of the fact that there are a number of study group leaders and the coordinator present to hold a meeting to discuss matters relating to study groups. I would like to hear from you if you have any point which you would like raised.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to John Lindner, Burns St, Axedale 35541.

SEED BANK

My thanks to those members who have forwarded seed for the seed bank. It is always welcome.

ADDITIONS

A. grandifolia
lanigera
polifolia
striatifolia

DELETIONS

A. gonophylla
longispinea

Please remember to mark any seeds you send with whether it is garden or bush collected. Any seeds required for spring planting this year should be requested before the end of May.

I would like to acknowledge receipt of newsletters from the Dodonaea, Eucalypt, Brachyscome/Helipterum and Dryandra study groups and from the Queensland, Victorian, NSW and WA regions. Thank you.

SLIDE LIBRARY

Slowly we are making progress with this project. I would like to express my appreciation of Eric Anderson's generosity in sending me from Rockhampton a selection of his excellent slides with permission to copy them for the group's slide library. John has copied about 24 of them for us and we are waiting for them to be processed. Christine Wadey and Betty Chandler have contributed slides also. Thank you.

BOOKS

Growing Australian Natives in Pots, Indoors and Outdoors by A. M. Blomberry, Kangaroo Press (p/b) \$8.95. 15 species listed and described.

MEMBERS' NOTES

A letter from Frankfurt, West Germany from **Thomas Ross** tells us of an awful winter, the second worst for the century, with two periods of 10-15 days with continuous frost between 7° - 15°F (I can't convert it!) and lots of

snow. Thomas thinks that all Australian plants in German gardens will have been killed or at least cut to the ground. These disasters have not discouraged him and he will be planting out more wattles, eucalypts and bottlebrushes again, in the hope that by planting many plants of each species nature will select the hardiest types and give them reliable plants for German gardens.

Six months ago **Terry Land** of Rylestone, NSW, found a grub tunnel in a tree of *A. melanoxyton* and as he was working with a caulking gun at the time, he filled the tunnel with caulk and smoothed it over the damaged bark. To date the tree is in "perfect condition". If you want to try it the caulk used was appropriately "No More Gaps".

After a visit to Canberra, Terry now sets seeds in pots on a wet sand base. He uses a free draining mix of creek sand and a little peat with good results.

A note of interest from **Doug Patience** of Darwin. He reported that while teaching plant propagation to students, he decided to try softwood cuttings of a number of Northern Territory species of Acacia. This was quite successful, as there was an extremely high rate of root initiation and development. The cutting material used came from seedlings between the height of 17-25cm (7-10"). Doug was planning to carry out trials on a wide range of NT species. (Perhaps we will be able to see these when we visit Darwin in June).

I am sure that everyone will be delighted to hear that **Bill Owen** has, as he puts it, "at least found a reasonably reliable way of germinating the (Acacia) seeds". He now pours near boiling water (90°C) over the seeds and plants them after 24 hours. He is continuing with his experiments.

A note from **Tony Bean** (Eucalypt Study Group leader who can't help noticing acacias, thank goodness!) told of an *Acacia complanata* which was in his glasshouse in a 10cm pot and was 30cm high and wide. It dried out and most of its "leaves" died. Amazingly the plant recovered and when he wrote it was flowering "like a beauty". Another plant of the same species had been planted out at Nambour and after 12 months was 50cm high and flowering profusely.

A January letter from **Beverley O'Keefe** of Springsure, Queensland, told of a September camping trip to a place called 'Bull Creek Gorge' off the Tambo-Springsure Road. The number of Acacias collected in flower was amazing. They included:

<i>A. bancroftii</i> (very narrow leafed form)	<i>A. gnidium</i>
<i>blakei</i>	<i>implexa</i>
<i>buxifolia</i> ssp <i>pubiflora</i>	<i>leptostachya</i>
<i>curvinervia</i>	<i>macradenia</i>
<i>diétrichiana</i>	<i>uncifera</i>

It must be a beautiful place in spring.

From **Alf Finch** comes the information that since May 1982 the Gympie City Council has planted the following:

c. 25 <i>A. fimbriata</i>	c. 10 <i>A. podalyriifolia</i>
50 <i>macradenia</i>	30 <i>spectabilis</i>
50 <i>melanoxyton</i>	

All seemed to be growing successfully except for *A. macradenia* which was planted on a road bank and Alf thought that the conditions may be too damp as it is not doing very well after two years.

I have had an *Acacia macradenia* growing in our garden for seven years. It is about 2m tall, slender, reasonably healthy and growing under the canopy of a eucalypt. It is the perfect example of a plant out of its climatic range – it has never flowered and I would be surprised if it ever did.

WINTER FLOWERING ACACIAS of the Pine Rivers District, near Brisbane, Qld)

(extracted from a recent Pine Rivers District newsletter by B. Henderson)

“Among the many Acacias in the Pine Rivers area, there are a few which flower from May till August. Some others have intermittent bursts of blossom during winter, but their main flowering time is at other times of the year.

During May and June, *Acacia leiocalyx* cannot go unnoticed. It is that large bushy wattle along the roadsides which provides so much colour with its masses of pale yellow catkins which almost hide the typically wattle leaves. When the blossoms are spent, the distinct reddish stems of the young twigs are quite noticeable. Like most Acacias it likes well-drained sandy or gravelly soils and is often found where areas have been cleared.

In June, as *A. leiocalyx* fades, a smaller wattle begins to flower along the stony ridges throughout the Pine Rivers region. In fact, *Acacia falcata* is very widespread, also growing in areas of NSW. It is slender, sparse shrub with light blue-green, sickle-shaped leaves, grows to around 2m and produces clusters of pale cream globular blossoms which turn reddish-pink as they become spent. It is this feature which first caught my attention. Though small enough to be suitable for most gardens, this Acacia could be rather insignificant unless planted in a group of several plants, imitating its natural habit.

As the colder weather of July makes us shiver, the countryside is brightened by splashes and then masses of the soft flower of *Acacia fimbriata*. Called the Brisbane Wattle, it is very common throughout the whole outer Brisbane area. It is a large, spreading shrub or small tree, somewhat prone to borers as it ages, but it is well known for its fine, narrow leaves and masses of very small, delicately perfumed globular blossoms.

Two other Acacias worthy of mention, but which actually flower in summer or autumn, are *A. irrorata* and *A. penninervis*. They are both attractive plants, with the former blooming in late summer in the more mountainous parts of the Pine Rivers, such as Mt Nebo, Mt Glorious, Samsonvale and Mt Mee. *A. irrorata* is very similar to *A. oshanesii*, with dark green, fern-like foliage and pale creamy-yellow globular blossoms, faintly perfumed. The main difference is that the leaves of *A. irrorata* are dark green below as well as above. *A. oshanesii* has intermittent flowers all year round.

Acacia penninervis is a medium-sized attractive shrub with coppery-tipped, glossy, light green leaves and cream globular flowers. Described as a summer flowerer, it has some blooms in July which was when I first noticed the plants along the stony roadsides. *Acacia penninervis* carries its long brown seed pods till about July and it could be a pretty garden shrub in spite of its pale cream flowers.”

A note from **Laurie Smith** who forwarded the above:

Acacia leuocladia (99% sure) lining Peace Boulevard in Hiroshima, Japan.

EXTRACTS FROM “COME BACK IN WATTLE TIME” by Edith Coleman, 1935

“Mulga Apples” a Gall

The dense thickets of the Mulga of the Western Plains (*A. aneura*) are infested by two kinds of gall. One of these is a large edible, succulent form, known as Mulga Apples. These are said to be very much appreciated by thirsty travellers in the heat of summer in those parts. Certain species of wattle are infested by galls of another kind. These are not caused by insects, but by a fungus similar to that which causes “rust” in wheat. In the spring, these galls, which take many curious shapes, are covered with a brown dust, which, seen under the microscope, becomes a host of exquisitely carved spheres, technically known as spores (or fruiting bodies). Truly Nature is greatest in small things The commonest rust, which infests the Juniper Wattle (*A. juniperina*), one of the most widely spread species, is known as *Uromycladium tepperianum*.

The Mistletoe Danger

“One of the most devastating of all the ills to which wattles are subject is the mistletoe pest, for, on those species which it favours, its work of destruction is terribly swift. The Blackwood appears to hold some special attraction for the Grey Mistletoe (*Loranthus quandang*), the deadliest of these semi-parasites.

In many species of mistletoe the glutinous seeds germinate more readily at the ends of branches, or on slender boughs, and in these instances it may be some years before the host-tree is completely overwhelmed. But the Grey Mistletoe germinates on the main trunk and on the largest branches of the tree it favours and thus, not having far to travel to tap the main food channel, its devastating inroads are rapid.

The mistletoe should, where possible, be destroyed before fruiting to prevent the infection of clean trees. Unfortunately, its leaves and flowers and fruits are very ornamental, and because of this the plants are left to complete their work of destruction.

In the larvae of certain butterflies, Nature has provided a partial control of the pest. These hungry caterpillars, left to themselves, will rapidly devour the leaves of large mistletoe clumps. But they, too, have their enemies not only birds, but humans, who destroy them under a misapprehension that they may spread to garden plants.”

We do not have mistletoes in Tasmania, but I feel sure that these comments of an earlier time will prove of interest to mainland members.

A NEW NAME FOR WA ACACIA

Acacia conniana Maslin – published in *Nuytsia* Vol 5 No. 2, 1984

This new name replaced the illegitimate homonym *Acacia cognata* Maiden et Blakely (1928). As well *A. acuminata* var. *latifolia* Benth. is relegated to synonymy under the new name.

It is found in a restricted area, coastal and near coastal to 40km inland from Cape Le Grand (25km south-east of Esperance) to near Israelite Bay (about 190km east of Esperance) usually in association with granite rocks.

It is normally a dense bushy shrub or tree 2-6m all with erect phyllodes, 5-16cm long x 3-12mm wide and bright yellow spike flowers. It is closely allied to *A. lasiocalyx*.

If you do require seeds for spring planting, please give me sufficient time to prepare the packets and send them to you before the end of May.

Marion Simmons
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ACACIA STUDY GROUP NOTES

<i>leptopetala</i> sw WA	Bushy shrub to 4m tall with spreading branches; phyllodes grey-green, linear-lanceolate 2-5cm long x 5-10mm; flowers pale yellow, globular in racemes, spring.
<i>leptospermoides</i> WA	Variable spreading shrub to 1.5m tall; phyllodes fleshy flattened, obovate, 5-13mm x 4-8mm; flowers bright yellow globular, one per axil, July-Sept. Sunny position, drained.
<i>leptostachya</i> Qld	Variable shrub or rounded trees to 5m tall; branchlets angular; phyllodes leathery with silver hairs, 5-12cm long, parallel veins; flowers bright yellow spikes, Mar-Sept; coastal or sub-coastal areas, sandy soil, open position.
<i>leucoclada</i> NSW, sth Qld	Spreading shrub or tree 4-9m occasionally more; dark trunk; bipinnate leaves; young tips silvery or whitish. Masses of yellow globular flowers in racemes, July-Sept. Hardy for hillsides and elevated areas near coast. Two forms.
<i>ligulata</i> across Aust	Spreading shrub 2-5m tall; phyllodes thick linear-oblong; flowers orange-yellow globular, Aug-Oct. Sand coast and inland.
<i>ligustrina</i> WA	Dense shrub to 2m tall; branchlets angular; phyllodes stiff oblong to 3cm long; flowers small, globular 1-2 per axil, July – Oct. Well-drained sunny position.
<i>limbata</i> NT, nth WA	Shrub 1-3m tall, branchlets angular; phyllodes ±oblong 5-8cm x 12-25mm netlike veins; flowers dense spikes in pairs in axils, mainly Apr – Aug; suit tropical climate.

<i>lineata</i> SA, Vic, NSW, Qld	Bushy spreading shrub to 2m tall; phyllodes narrow-linear green, 7-15mm long; nerve closest to lower margin; flowers bright yellow globular, 1 or 2 per axil, spring. Widespread mostly in dry areas.
<i>linifolia</i> NSW	Straggling arching shrub to 3m; phyllodes dark green linear 2-5cm; flowers globular, cream, in axillary racemes. Pods flat, purplish-brown. Found Sydney-Blue Mountains area.
<i>linophylla</i> WA, NT, SA	Bushy often tall shrub to small tree; phyllodes grey, linear pungent 10-18cm long; flowers bright yellow rods; mainly June-Sept. From tropical inland areas.
<i>littorea</i> sw WA	Dense bushy shrub usually 1-2m tall; phyllodes triangular dark green; flowers pale yellow globular, August-November. Found on coastal dunes and nearby areas.
<i>loderi</i> SA, NSW, Vic	Tall shrub to tree to 10m tall; bark rough furrowed; phyllodes thick silver-grey, linear 7-11cm long, curved point; flowers yellow globular in clusters, Aug-Oct. Similar to Western Myall (<i>A. papyrocarpa</i>). Grows in clumps, often suckers.
<i>longipedunculata</i> Qld	Sparse shrub 1-2m tall; resinous branchlets; phyllodes fine, crowded in whorls 1-1.5cm long; flowers bright yellow globular or slightly elongated on long stalks, May-July. Restricted to dry areas in Cook and North Kennedy districts.
<i>longiphyllodinea</i> sw WA	Wiry rigid shrub 2-3m tall; phyllodes thick grooved, round to 40cm long; flowers bright yellow spikes, August-October. Found in yellow sand or sandy gravel, needs good drainage.
<i>longispicata</i> Qld	Shrub-tree to 10m tall with stout angular branchlets; phyllodes large silvery 9-18cm x 1.5-4cm, 3 more prominent longitudinal nerves; flowers bright yellow spikes often in pairs. Found in usually sandy soils from near Kingaroy to about Mt Garnet. Flowers July-September.
<i>longissima</i> s Qld, NSW	Slender shrub/small tree to 5m tall; phyllodes dark green straight, linear-linear/lanceolate 6-16(25)cm long x 1-9mm, mid nerve prominent; flowers cream-yellow, interrupted spikes Jan-April. Occurs in open forest in areas of high rainfall.
<i>loroloba</i> Qld	Shrub to small tree to 9m tall, spreading habit; young tips pale yellow or golden; leaves bipinnate, 11-18 pairs of pinnae; small leaflets; flowers pale yellow globular in racemes, Dec-March. Found in Darling Downs area, need similar conditions.
<i>loxophylla</i> var. <i>nervosa</i> sw WA	Shrub 1-2m spreading; phyllodes bright green about 1.25cm long, distinctly veined; flowers bright yellow globular, spring; found on granitic loam in hilly country. Adaptable.
<i>luteola</i> sw WA	Shrub to 1m tall; leaves bipinnate 1-3 pairs of pinnae; flowers usually pale or sulphur yellow, obloid to cylindrical usually solitary, Feb-Sept. Considered adaptable in cultivation.
<i>lysiphloia</i> across ntn Aust	Sticky shrub to c. 5m tall, spreading; bark minni ritchi (red brown, curling off in strips); phyllodes usually sticky narrow-oblong, pointed, 1.5-5cm long x 1.5-4mm. Pods sticky. Flowers dense spikes, bright yellow, May-August. Found in tropical areas in sandy soils; needs good drainage.
<i>mabellae</i> se NSW	Spreading tree to 15m tall; new growth densely covered with golden-yellow hairs; phyllodes thin, lanceolate 9-20cm or more long x 10-18mm, mid vein. Flowers in short racemes, pale yellow large globular, Aug-Oct. Found near coastal slopes.
<i>macradenia</i> se Qld	Open shrub 3-4m tall with zig-zag branches; spiny stipules; phyllodes spreading lanceolate, one nerved 10-25cm x 8-22mm, large gland; flowers large bright yellow globular in racemes, August flowering. Grows on stony and sandy soils often near creek banks.
<i>maitlandii</i> across Aust centre	Sparse shrub to 3m tall; branchlets stocky; phyllodes linear-lanceolate 8-20mm long x 2-5mm, sharply pointed, mid-vein. Flowers deep yellow, globular on axillary stalks, spring. Seeds transverse in pod. Occurs inland in deep sandy soil.
<i>mangium</i> n Qld & outside Aust	Tree to 30m tall; branchlets acutely angular; phyllodes up to 25cm long, four main longitudinal veins; flowers pale loose spikes to 10cm long, Dec-June. Pods coiled. Occurs on margin of mangroves and rainforests in coastal areas.

- mearnsii*
NSW, Vic, Tas
Black Wattle. Tree to 10m tall; branchlets hairy, angular; dark green hairy bipinnate leaves; 12-18 pairs of pinnae; flowers pale yellow globular in racemes, Sept – Nov. Grows readily in many areas.
- meosneri*
sw WA
Spreading or upright shrub 2-4m tall; new shoots very angular; phyllodes blue-green 1-2cm long x 6-12mm; flowers deep yellow, globular. Pods conspicuous, thick narrowed between seeds. Inland species, adaptable. Grows quite well in Tasmania.
- melanoxylon*
Qld, NSW, Vic, SA, TAs
Blackwood. Tree 8-30m tall; phyllodes elliptical-lanceolate 4-10cm x 1-2.5cm, 2-4 prominent veins; flowers large pale yellow or cream, globular. Pods flat curled, bright orange funicle folded around seed.
- merinthophora*
WA
Spreading shrub to about 4m tall; branches zig-zagging pendulous; new growth resinous; phyllodes threadlike, round curved to 30cm long with blunt point; flowers bright yellow rods, May-Sept. Unusual shrub for sunny, well-drained areas.