

S.G.A.P. ACACIA STUDY GROUP
NEWSLETTER NO. 50
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Dear Members

First of all my apologies for the delay in the arrival of this newsletter. It was due entirely to pressing writing commitments with 30 April deadlines. I have been revising the text of 'Acacias of Australia' and have written another small book called 'Growing Acacias' which will be published later this year.

NEW MEMBERS

Welcome to the following who have joined us since November:

Tim Hayes, 76 Union Street, Goulburn 2580
Brenton Lee, 69 Barrack Rd, Hope Valley 5090
Mrs Val Crowley, 8 Nangip Cresc., Darkan 6352
SGAP SA Region, PO Box 304, Unley 5061
SGAP Tas Region, Box 1353P, Hobart, 7001

Change of Address:

Mrs C N Wadey, 49 Allison Cresc, North Eltham 3095

SEED LIST

Not many changes here. I have received seed lists from Eastern Hills Branch of WA Wildflower Society and one from Mr R Horner of Alice Springs. They are not stocking any seeds that we do not already have in the seed bank. We are still waiting for the list from Nindethana.

Additions: *A. barattensis*
 A. species with affinities to A. boormanii from Mullion Range, near Orange, NSW

ACACIA SLIDE LIBRARY

We have received a few more slides towards this and I would like to thank members for their contributions. I am afraid lack of time has meant this still has not been taken further.

FINANCIAL REPORT MAY 1987

Balance 30 Jun 1985	\$151.81	
Subscriptions & Donations	432.30	
Interest	<u>18.16</u>	602.27
<u>Expenses</u>		
Seeds	13.05	
Post	190.54	
Copying and Stationery	123.75	
Bank Charges	<u>7.67</u>	<u>335.01</u>
Balance		<u>\$267.26</u>

MEMBERS' NOTES

An interesting note from **Rosemary Pedler** of Koolunga in South Australia, in which she tells us of an interesting and difficult hike to find the plants and seed of *A. barattensis*.

This acacia grows in the Willipa Bluff area and on their first trip Rosemary and her companions found about 12 plants. On the second trip in a slightly different area a larger number of plants were found. This was exciting as they had not been recorded from the particular area before.

Phillip Totten wrote a very interesting letter earlier in the year about his area near Orange and the acacias he is growing in his garden. It is quite an impressive list. He forwarded the seeds of the plant with affinities to *A. boormanii*. Phillip describes it as follows: "It is a beautiful shrub about 0.8-2m x 1-2m, the phyllodes are fine and needle-like though not pungent; phyllodes from 2-8cm x 2-3mm but sometimes finer (5-10cm x 1.5mm in the ones I have grown). It does sucker but does not invade. This shrub occurs in the Mullion Range about 12 miles north of Orange. The soils are well-drained clays of poor fertility, it occurs in dry sclerophylla forest. It has proven hardy in the garden and grows in full sun or semi-shade, the foliage being very ornamental." Phillip says that this shrub flowers in early spring and that the flowers are similar to *A. boormanii*. It must be very frost tolerant as Orange has a very frosty cold winter climate.

Brenton Lee has written giving us details of his block in Hope Valley, SA. The soil is neutral to slightly acid so he should not have too much trouble selecting suitable acacias to grow satisfactorily for him. At present he has growing *Acacia pendula* and *Acacia papyrocarpa*.

David Shiells of Shepparton in Vic has written to tell us about his success with *A. congesta*. This is a mat-like plant from the south-west WA. David grew his plant from seed bank seed and it was planted out on his block in about 1984. Since then it has not looked back, it is growing in clay loam and in full sun and has taken a prostrate habit. Several cuttings taken in 1986 have struck readily and no doubt they have been planted out by now. David feels that this shrub has good horticultural potential even though it does possess prickly spines.

He considers that *A. ashbyae* from WA would have to be one of the best foliated plants he knows. Of the two plants originally planted on his block one died, the other is still growing well. He has since planted two more at his home and apart from wind damage (they seem to be in a wind tunnel) both are doing well.

Tim Hays from Goulburn, NSW, is establishing a native garden in the back part of his plot. He has developed raised beds of bush soil for his plants, which should give them a good start and provide the good drainage preferred by most acacias and many other plants as well! Frost may be a problem in his area from what he tells me, as last year even *A. baileyana* in the district were damaged by frost. Careful selection of plants will have to be made to start with, but once overhead cover has been established, one can become more adventurous with the plants that are grown.

PUTTING A NAME TO YOUR PLANTS

If you are growing an acacia which you cannot identify, your State Herbarium may be willing to help you. I understand that some Herbaria charge for this service, so it would be wise to check before sending in material.

Specimens submitted should be about 20cm long having flowers and/or pods attached. There is no point in sending material with only phyllodes or leaves, as it is almost impossible to identify a plant successfully from so little. Also information on the plant's State of origin, if known, is a tremendous help. Specimens should be pressed and dried before sending to the herbarium. Usually the herbaria do not like to receive more than a few specimens at a time for identification.

WATTLE DAY

(NSW information taken from the NSW Regional Newsletter of Jan/Feb 1987)

Wattle Day was once a day of some special significance but interest in it seems to have waned in recent years.

However, in New South Wales at least, something positive has been done to restore the public's awareness of Wattle Day. After requests from a member of SGAP, Maria Hitchcock of Armidale, the NSW Minister of Education has stated that he will arrange for a notice to be placed in the Education Gazette to bring Wattle Day on 1 August and Arbor Day on the last Monday in July (27th) to the schools' notice in time to enable them to plan a week of related educational activities.

This is a promising start. Perhaps you would like to become involved locally in restoring the day to its prominence, through encouraging and helping teachers take up the idea at your local school. One lady in NSW hands out sprigs of wattle and poems about Wattle Day to children at local schools. Last year she donated small wattle plants for children to take home and plant.

Wattle flowers were sold in the streets in aid of charities on earlier Wattle Days. However, there is some disagreement as to whether the day should be held on 1 August or 1 September. Wattle Day leagues were active previously in most states and some of them may still be today.

NATIONAL FLORAL EMBLEM

Acacia pycnantha has been Australian floral emblem for many years but it has never been proclaimed officially. It would seem that the bicentennial year would be an appropriate time for such a proclamation.

Maria Hitchcock was informed that the matter of official proclamation of floral and faunal symbols would be addressed in a review to be undertaken sometime in the future. The last part of the statement is rather vague. Perhaps a few letters from individuals could hasten the procedure.

If you would like to support either of these two proposals, you could write to either the Federal Minister for Arts, Heritage and Environment, Mr Cohen or to Maria Hitchcock, "Fangorn", Old Inverell Road, Armidale 2350.

ACACIA INFORMATION

ACIAR (Australian Centre for International Agricultural Research) have forwarded us the first two issues of their 'Forestry Newsletter' and put the Study Group on the mailing list for future copies. They contain a lot of information regarding acacias and other species which are being used in trials in Australia and in other countries in our area. This information will be used in future newsletters.

We have also been forwarded copies of the CSIRO Division of Forest Research Acacia pamphlets. To date sixteen acacias have been described with detail of distribution, climate, soil, habitat, fodder and timber values etc. They include *A. cambagei*, *harpophylla*, *peuce*, *saligna*, *acuminata*, *baileyana*, *aneura*, *auriculiformis*, *mangium*, *aulacocarpa*, *drummondii*, *pendula*, *salicina*, *victoriae*, *farnesiana* and *pruinocarpa*.

NEW BOOKS

"Multi-purpose Australian Trees and Shrubs", ed. J. W. Turnbull, published by ACIAR, Canberra 1986. 100 species for fuelwood and agroforestry; 54 acacias included, the majority suitable for tropical climates. \$30.00 Available from: Scientific & Technical Books, 4 Longbourne Av., North Clayton 3168.

"Flora of South Australia" 4 vols. State Herbarium SA 1986, 107 acacias which occur in SA are described in Vol. 2.

"Flora of the Perth Region" (in two parts) WA Herbarium 1987. 51 acacias are described in part 1 - \$45 for the two parts plus \$10.00 for postage.

"Grow What Small Plant", Aust. Plant Study Group, Nelson 1987, 33 acacias briefly described, \$29.95.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Please note that in accordance with the regulation laid down at ASGAP conference 1985 ALL SUBSCRIPTIONS are due on 30th June. It will be in order for you to pay a proportional amount to bring it into line, or if the sub. Is due now just leave it until 30 June and all will be well.

SALT TOLERANCE OF SOME ACACIAS

One of the informative articles published in Forestry Newsletter No. 2 1986 ACIAR dealt briefly with the screening of Australian trees for salt tolerance.

Some of the tree species of northern Australia are known to have performed well overseas, so it was decided to screen some of the less well-known species under glasshouse conditions in Australia. The genera chosen included Acacia, Melaleuca and Casuarina. The seed was collected as far as possible from saline conditions in northern Australia.

From the time the seedlings were 8 weeks old, every two days they were applied with a salt solution. Regular checks were taken as the trials progressed and particular note was made of growth, injury symptoms and seedling loss.

Large differences were found in salt tolerance between the species. For instance, 50% loss for *A. torulosa* and *A. stenophylla* occurred when the salt concentration reached a certain point (about 14 increases) with *A. torulosa* and about 74 increases with *A. stenophylla*. *A. torulosa* seedlings stopped growing much earlier than did those of *A. stenophylla* which were still growing after 40 applications.

The most promising Acacia species of those tested were found to be *A. stenophylla*, *A. salicina*, *A. auriculiformis*, *A. ampliceps* and *A. bivenosa*.

More detailed trials are planned to assess further aspects of salt tolerance as well as the combined effects of waterlogging and saline stress.

I hope to have the next newsletter ready to send out in August and then be back on schedule by November.

Remember that any information about acacias is always welcome. Without your letters, the newsletter is always the poorer.

Marion Simmons
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