Acacia brunioides

Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) Inc.

ACACIA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER

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Note: If you wish to view or download previous Study Group Newsletters, they are available on the Study Group website.

The address is:

http://anpsa.org.au/acaciaSG

From The Leader

Dear Members

My observations have been that late winter early spring this year has been a particularly good period for wattles flowering – at least based on observations in our own garden and a couple of walks in nearby reserves (any observations over a wider area have not been permitted under Melbourne's 5km limit on travel from home). It is always exciting when plants flower for the first time, and we have recently in our garden had the first ever flowering of *Acacia denticulosa* and *A. daviesii*. Our garden had been scheduled to be open under the Open Gardens Victoria program in early September, but the opening was cancelled, just one of the Covid casualties. But hopefully, the flowering next year will be just as good as it was this year.

The restrictions under which we have lived for the last few months (especially in Melbourne) have clearly impacted on how people spend their time each day. For example, our property backs on to a creek reserve where there is a walking and cycling track, and use of this path by locals has increased substantially in the last few months – walking and cycling are two forms of exercise allowed. I believe that apart from the exercise, many of these individuals have been encouraged to observe their local environment.

For example, I was sent a specimen of an Acacia that someone had observed on one of their outings, with a question as to what species it was. Another person emailed me a photo of an Acacia that they had admired in a garden that they had walked past. Interestingly, in this case, I recognized the garden as belonging to one of our Australian Plants Society members – and after making a phone call, I was able to advise that the plant was an *Acacia drummondii* (probably ssp. *elegans*), also that it is 4 years old, having been planted in July 2016, and that the plant growing above

it was *Eucalyptus tetraptera*. I believe that the person who admired the wattle that she saw in the garden is now hoping to plant one in her own garden.

During our period of lockdown, it also seems to me that some people have undertaken a couple of other activities. Some have elected to take the opportunity of a clean out – I was recently asked if I would like a copy of a 1934 paper from the Proceedings of the Linnean Society of NSW, titled Studies in the Australian Acacias IV, The Life History of *Acacia baileyana* Part 2. As it turned out, the Proceedings of the Linnean Society of NSW can be freely downloaded from the Internet (from the Biodiversity Library), so I didn't take up the kind offer – but I now have a pdf of the paper to read when time allows.

I believe the period of lockdown has also encouraged some people to go through old plant photos and to try to identify species. One such person was Acacia Study Group member **Chris Clarke** – see the reference to Chris's photos on page 4.

A further impact of the current restrictions (in Melbourne) is that copying and printing of the newsletter for those members who receive hardcopy newsletters is problematic. For those members where I have an email address I will forward a digital copy to them, and hope to post a hardcopy to them at a later time. For members where I do not have an email address, I will print a few copies on my home printer and post these in the normal way.

For the time being at least, I believe that it is appropriate that only email membership be available to new members (this has in fact been the option taken up by most recent new members, and it is also consistent with the approach adopted by a number of other Study Groups).

Thank you to those members who have already renewed their memberships for the 2020/21 year. If you have not yet renewed your membership, it would be appreciated if you could attend to this. Details regarding membership renewal are shown on page 10.

Bill Aitchison

Welcome

A special welcome to the following new members to the Study Group.

Jesse Saillard, ACT
Jan-Willem Vos, France

From Members and Readers

Judy Clark (East Sussex, UK) noted that it has been extremely dry in the UK and although with coronavirus she has had more time to do the garden, it seems to have all been spent watering.

Judy did have a couple of questions, which I tried to answer for her – but if anyone has any different responses, let me know and I will pass on to her.

(1) Judy had received a query from someone who has an *Acacia melanoxylon* tree, about 6m high, grown from seed sown in November 2014. The tree has not yet flowered and Judy was asked how long this species would take to flower.

My response to Judy was:
"I don't have any personal knowledge of what the answer may be, although I would have guessed that nearly 6 years sounds quite long, I would also have expected that times of first flowering would vary according to the conditions. However, I did a bit of searching and found a couple of references. The WA Florabase website (https://florabase.dpaw.wa.gov.au/browse/profile/10955) says that the time to first flowering is 5 years. I also had a look in Bruce Maslin's book AcaciaSearch which profiles a number of Acacia species as possible woody crop options. The profile of *Acacia melanoxylon* can be found at http://worldwidewattle.com/infogallery/utilisation/acaciasearch/pdf/melanoxylon.pdf and here it states that it may flower as early as 2 years of age (I think that may have been based on experience in Queensland which would be quite different conditions to the UK).

So, 5 years, 2 years - I don't know the answer - but if the tree is looking healthy (6m high sounds pretty good after 5-6 years), I would just be patient and hopefully it will decide to flower when it is ready."

(2) Judy's second question related to *Acacia acinacea*. She has a specimen which is (now) doing very nicely. However, prior to flowering this year it lost almost all its leaves and Judy thought it would be a goner. But no, it sprouted new leaves and is looking fine. It has done this once before. Is this usual behaviour?

I wasn't really able to help Judy much with this question. I wouldn't have thought that losing leaves and sprouting new leaves would have been normal behaviour here, but maybe losing leaves could be related to the cold conditions in England. I noted that *Acacia acinacea* is a species where some forms can be can be cut back pretty hard and they will then sucker. Maybe the behaviour that Judy observed is a function of the same properties that enable plants to sucker? Any thoughts anyone?

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Sandra McKenzie (Moonta Bay, SA) advised (31 July 2020) that she had just returned about a week before from a field trip that her local APS Northern Yorke Peninsula Group had made to Hillaba Nature Foundation Reserve which is north west of the Gawler Ranges on Northern Eyre Peninsula. She advises that you turn right at Iron Knob and after travelling 270kms on dirt roads you reach Hillaba. Sandra reports as follows:

"Stunning scenery with lots of vegetation. The Nature Foundation took over the property 8 years ago and have been restoring the property by removing all stock and slowly removing weeds, feral animals like goats, camels etc. Fences needed repairing, buildings renovated, plant, bird and animal surveys done, the list goes on. We were fortunate enough to have Ken Warnes with us to provide plant id and history of the area. It was his 28th trip so he knows the area well. We went far enough west to where station country ends and the Great Victoria Desert starts. Very remote and made me feel very fortunate to live in this amazing country. Not a lot of Acacias in flower at present as it is a bit dry and in between flowering times, although they had good rains in February and April.

The Acacias growing on Hiltaba include *acanthoclada*, *ancistrophylla* var *lissophylla*, *aneura*, *beckleri*, *burkittii*, *calamifolia*, *continua*, *euthycarpa*, *halliana*, *havilandiorum*, *iteaphylla*, *ligulata*, *notabilis*, *nyssophylla*, *oswaldii*, *papyrocarpa*, *rigens*, *tarculensis*, *tetragonophylla,* and *toondulya*. Hope I got the spelling correct. If not they are typos!!!!!!!"

***Acacia toondulya* in flower at Hillaba – a substantial climb up a hill to take the photo. Photo Samdra McKenzie**

Sandra also wrote (7 August 2020):

"Freezing cold here today max 10deg, still dry but *Acacia toondulya*, *imbricata, pycnantha* and *hakeoides* in flower brightening up the place. Might even have some flowers this year of the low growing Acacias from the seed which you sent me a couple of years ago. By the way we have formed a small Bonsai group and I hope to get a couple of Acacias bonsaied when the weather gets warmer. More on that later."

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In our previous Newsletter No. 147, we included a report from **Sean Walsh** relating to his research at the University of Melbourne, which involved a study of seeds in the soil in old Acacia forests in the Central Highlands of Victoria. Sean now reports that he has been busy growing Acacias from his soil seed bank experiment, and now has more than 300 plants potted into tubes.

Acacias in Cell Trays and Tube Pots Photo: Sean Walsh

"Extra" pinnae ? Photo: Sean Walsh

He has now started the work of identifying the species. He advises that the vast majority look like *Acacia dealbata*, but a few seedlings are showing signs of more than one gland between pinnae pairs, suggesting perhaps *A. mearnsii*.

But what really surprised him was a seedling with small "extra" pinnae growing out of the rachis, at odd angles (see photo on previous page). He would be interested to know whether anyone has seen anything like this before, and can provide any explanation as to what is happening? He notes that it is a real mystery to him.

If you have any thoughts regarding this, Sean would love to hear from you. His email address is seanfwalsh.research@gmail.com.

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Chris Clarke (Thornbury, Vic) has spent some time whilst in lockdown going through his photos and trying to identify some of the plants he has photographed.

His photos included 133 Acacia observations, which he has loaded on to the iNaturalist website – these can be viewed at

https://inaturalist.ala.org.au/observations?place_id=any&subview=table&taxon_id=47452&user_id=chrisclarke25&verifiable=any

Some of the photos have been identified, but others still lack a species name. One such photo is reproduced below.

This photo was taken on 2 September 2017 at Bremer Bay, WA (**Lat:** -34.399028 **Lon:** 119.382087).

If you can identify this, or any of Chris's other unidentified wattles, you could either add an ID to the iNaturalist website (you would need to create a log in to do this), or alternatively you could email acaciastudygroup@gmail.com, and I will pass on to Chris.

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Thanks to **Victoria Tanner** for drawing attention to a few recent media references.

A media release (31 March 2020) from the Australian Network for Plant Conservation Inc highlighted the value of native plant seed, and provided a link to download a pdf (The Australian Native Seed Survey Report). Reference: https://www.anpc.asn.au/media-releases/where-will-the-seeds-come-from/

The following ABC report (10 September 2020) relates to the endangered *Acacia whibleyana* (Whibley Wattle): https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-09-10/threatened-tumby-bay-whibley-wattle/12649278

Another ABC report (1 September 2020) related to Wattle Day: https://www.abc.net.au/news/2020-09-01/wattle-day-celebrating-110th-anniversary-and-growing-prominence/12574654

Victoria also provided a link to some Guides' Notes prepared by the Friends of the ANBG, on the subject of a Wattle Walk within the Gardens. So you can enjoy a virtual walk in the Gardens. The link is: https://www.friendsanbg.org.au/guidesweb/couch/uploads/file/wattle_walk_2020_guides_notes_20200816.pdf

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Andrea Dennis (Doncaster East, Vic) reports that her 9 year old son Anthony recently admired her *Acacia merinthophora* in full bloom, and demanded a piece to take to school. However, he won't tell her whom it was that he gave it to. Andrea comments that she will make a gardener out of him yet! In my day, we used to take an apple to the teacher.

New species - *Acacia ureniae*

Acacia ureniae is a recently described new species of Acacia from the Cobungra area of eastern Victoria. It is named in honour of one of the members of our Acacia Study Group, **Anne U'Ren**.

This species superficially resembles some forms of *Acacia longifolia* or *A. melanoxylon*. It is a shrub or small tree to about 5m high. Phyllodes are rather stiffly erect, 55-95mm long x 7-16mm wide, mid green, with midvein and usually 2 longitudinal nerves, often with 2-4 less distinct, approximately longitudinal nerves branching off from near the base. Inflorescences are simple, spicate.

It is known from the vicinity of the Cobungra River from near its headwater below Mt Higginbotham to Cobungra settlement, with an isolated occurrence in the Dargo River catchment, about 12km south of the nearest known occurrence. From a conservation point of view, it is considered to lie within an IUCN threat category of endangered. However, its conservation status is speculative because of the difficulty of access to much of the Cobungra

River (as a consequence of which survey effort through its known range is not high).

The species was noted by Anne U'Ren on her property, Sinza, which comprises about 40ha of mature sub-alpine woodland, at an altitude from about 930 to 1000m. Neville Walsh (Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria) visited the property in January 2019, and found that the plants at that stage were in early bud. A subsequent visit to the property by Neville in October 2019 allowed collection of flowering specimens and an assessment of its local abundance – an estimated 80 plants were found on Anne's property at that time.

Acacia ureniae **Photo: Anne U'Ren**

Unfortunately, the catastrophic bushfires of summer 2019/20 impacted Sinza, and on revisiting the property in February 2020, Neville found only four plants out of the 80 still alive. It is not yet known if the other nearby populations were burnt in the same fires. It is assumed that a new cohort of plants will grow from soil-stored seed, although this will depend on favourable conditions for seedling development.

The species has been named in honour of Anne U'Ren, in recognition of her commitment to conservation which has ensured that the property supporting the type population of the species is preserved into the future (a permanent, legally binding conservation covenant has been applied to the property title).

I asked Anne if she would write a few notes for our Newsletter in relation to her experience from first observing the "different" wattle on her property, to the present time. She wrote as follows:

"When I found 'my' wattle I gave it an incorrect name and when Neville visited in January last year he said it was 'different' and so began the journey to naming it. Before the Herbarium folk visited in October last year I went down to the river every week to see if it would be flowering when the Herbarium people visited, and it was in full flower and those five 'experts' were like children around a lolly drop. It was really a wonderful sight and never to be forgotten. It is very steep and rough down to the Cobungra and I also crossed it to find nearly fifty plants on the other side. After lunch the Herbarium folk went up stream above the gorge which is too difficult for me and they found another forty-odd trees there. I was so excited when Neville's article finally appeared in Muelleria. Sadly the fire of the 4th of January left only four trees upstream of the gorge. I used to go down to the river regularly as it is so wonderful with its beautiful plants and the water rushing by - I find it very uplifting. After a couple of accidents since the fire – one of which had me rolling down the hill to the river - I have not been down there and I have been busy cutting up and mulching all the mess up here."

Reference:
Walsh, N. (2020). *Acacia ureniae* (Fabaceae: Caesalpinioideae), a new, rare wattle from eastern Victoria. Muelleria 39: 3-7

New species - *Acacia lachnocarpa*

This recently described new species was previously informally named as *Acacia* sp. Mt Holland. It is a dense rounded shrub 70-100 cm high, it has sharply pungent phyllodes 18-35 mm long and 1.5-3.5 mm wide, with 6-9 raised nerves per face. It has single, globular flower heads with peduncles 4-7 mm long. Seed pods are densely woolly-hairy with a mixture of white hairs and red resin-hairs.

The epithet is from the Greek *lachno-* (woolly) and *–carpa* (fruited), in reference to the densely woolly pods. The common name Woolly-fruited Wattle has been applied to it. Note that it is not only the seed pods that are woolly, the branchlets are densely covered with woolly hairs to about 1.2 mm long, and the peduncles are also covered with a dense covering of white hairs and red-resin hairs.

At this stage, *A. lachnocarpa* is only known with certainty from the vicinity of Mount Holland, which is about 120 km south of Southern Cross, WA. It has been listed as Priority One under Conservation Codes for Western Australian Flora. It is noted that Mount Holland is an area that is highly prospective for mining.

This species had previously been informally named (*A.* sp. Mt Holland), but interestingly there are another 75 informally named taxa in WA that require further taxonomic research.

Reference:
Davis, R.W. & Hislop, M. (2020). *Acacia lachnocarpa* (Fabaceae), a new, geographically restricted Wattle from the Coolgardie bioregion of Western Australia. *Nuytsia* 31: 213–216.

Revealing the secrets of Golden Wattle

It was in 2003 that the Human Genome Project was completed, as a result of which scientists had for the first time an understanding of the genetic blueprint for building a human being. This knowledge has had an impact in the fields of medicine, biotechnology and life sciences. For example, in the field of medicine, it has enabled us to identify mutations in genes that are linked to various forms of cancer or other diseases, which in turn can help in predicting the onset of these diseases, and possible treatment options.

But it is not only humans who have a genetic blueprint, it is also other animals and plants.

In this regard, the Genomics for Australian Plants (GAP) initiative is a national and collaborative initiative supported by funding from various sources. Under this initiative, the genome of the Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*), our national floral emblem, will be the first reference genome to be studied. A similar initiative will also be undertaken in relation to *Telopea speciosissima* (waratah).

The GAP initiative aims to develop genomic resources to enhance our understanding of the evolution and conservation of Australia's unique flora (which comprises more than 21,000 flowering plant species). In particular, it aims to:

- Sequence and assemble representative Australian plant genomes across the tree of life to enable better conservation, utilization and understanding of Australia's unique plant diversity;
- Build genomic capacity across Australian Botanic Gardens and Herbaria to create networks collaborating in the collection, management, dissemination and application of genomic data for Australian plants;
- Provide tools to enable genomic data to be used to identify and classify biodiversity at a range of scales and to use these tools to inform conservation management and enable better decision making.

The leader of the *Acacia pycnantha* genome project which aims to publish the first Acacia genome is **Dr Daniel Murphy**, Senior Research Scientist (Molecular Systematics) at the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria.

Dr Murphy (who is a member of the Acacia Study Group) has kindly provided some additional detail relating to the potential benefits to be derived from this project. He writes as follows:

"We can potentially use a whole genome for many purposes. The conservation potential is that we can develop genetic markers to examine the natural levels of variation in any species. We do not have a particular species in mind, as my project is developing that basic data underlying what others may use it for. A little like the Australasian Virtual Herbarium or any science that described basic data underlying nature or physics etc.

Utilisation potential is the identification of particular genes or sections of the genome that are linked to traits of importance. This is something that would be developed by others in the future. Somewhat similar to what is now known about crops like Rice or Wheat, where many, many genomes have been sequenced."

Some web references relating to the genome project are:

https://www.genomicsforaustralianplants.com/
https://www.genomicsforaustralianplants.com/reference-genome/
https://bioplatforms.com/news/golden-wattle-media-release/

Château Pérouse Botanical Gardens

Judy Clark (East Sussex, UK) recently alerted me to an ambitious botanical project that has been taking shape over the last fifteen years in an old wine estate in the south of France. The idea of a private botanical park was conceived by **Jan-Willem Vos** in about 2003, and the purchase of the estate was made in 2005. This vast project aims to provide conditions suitable to growing plants from all Mediterranean climate regions around the world. Currently the project mobilizes the energy of thirteen people. The Gardens are open to the public.

Jan-Willem Vos

The Gardens cover an area of 15 acres, and the plant palette allows visitors to move from the south of France to other countries with a comparable Mediterranean climate, such as Australia, South Africa, Chile and California. Acacias are extremely well represented, to the extent that the Gardens hold the French National Collection of Acacia (a CCVS as

they are known in France). Currently on site there are 269 taxa of the tribe Acacieae.

Other recognized collections in the Gardens are the CCVS National Collection of Eucalyptus, the CCVS Approved Collection of Melaleucas and the CCVS Approved Collection of Podocarpaceae.

The website for the Gardens (https://www.chateau-perouse.com/en/index-en/) provides more information regarding the Gardens, and also includes an extensive database of plants in the Gardens. The list of Acacias in the Gardens is very impressive. One species that I noted was *Acacia telmica* – I did a search of our past Study Group newsletters and this seems to be a species that has never rated even a mention in any past newsletter. So I have rectified this below!

Château Pérouse Botanical Gardens
(The Acacias that are in this photo are *A. rubida*, *A. cultriformis*, *A. pravissima* and *A. redolens*. Also present is *Agonis flexuosa*.)

Jan-Willem Vos has recently joined our Study Group, and in some recent communication with him, he noted that he is keen to help in improving knowledge about Acacias. He noted that at the Gardens they are working towards the integration of university studies (University of Montpellier) and research elements much like what we have in Australia. This will take time to implement, but they are currently in the "getting to know each other phase".

Acacia telmica

Acacia telmica is a dense rounded shrub 1-3m high, 1.5-5m wide. Phyllodes are elliptic to narrowly elliptic, mostly 2-4cm long and 8-20mm wide. Inflorescences are 3-5 headed racemes, with golden globular flower heads.

It is an uncommon species occurring in the Irwin – Strawberry (near Dongar) and Lake Logue – Lake Indoon areas (near Eneabba) in south-western WA. It grows on sand, loam and loamy clay in low-lying seasonally moist areas, in woodland or shrubland.

The generic name *telmica* comes from the Greek, *telmatos*, habitats which are seasonally waterlogged.

Reference:
Chapman, A.R. & Maslin, B.R. (1992). *Acacia* Miscellany 5. A review of the *A. bivenosa* group (Leguminosae: Mimosoideae: Section *Phyllodineae*). *Nuytsia* 8(2): 249–283.

Golden Wattle Award

Every year since 2011 the Wattle Day Association has awarded the Golden Wattle Award, this being an honorary recognition of the actions or achievements of an Australian or Australians whose contributions in the past 12 months deserve special acknowledgement by Australians.

The Association made the announcement in relation to the 2020 award as follows:

"The 2020 Golden Wattle Award winners are Australia's health and medical professionals and allied workers, who have been at the front line of the fight against the Coronavirus (COVID-19) and who, day after day, have put their own lives at risk to keep the Australian community healthy and safe.

This award is in recognition of their expertise and skill, their dedication and commitment and their unselfish demonstration of the very best of care and compassion for their fellow Australians."

The Wattle Day Association website is http://www.wattleday.asn.au/.

Acacia cretacea

Acacia cretacea has been referred to in our Newsletter on a number of occasions in recent years. It is a rare and endangered shrub or small tree found only in a small area near Cowell on Eyre Peninsula in South Australia. For example, in Newsletter No. 139 (December 2017) Sandra McKemzie reported on having visited the area where the plants occur, and noting that some of the trees had died and that area was looking the worse for wear.

Sandra has made another visit to the site near Cowell, and wrote (14 July 2020) as follows:

"Don and I visited the *A. cretacea* spot about 6 weeks ago and found that some of the 'dead sticks' are showing a new lease of life. Some of the trees were in flower and the general area was looking a bit fresher as there had been some good rain in February and early April. We also found a few young trees growing on the mounded up verge of the road, which made me feel much better. I guess they have been through some tough times before this current drought. However, there hasn't been much rain since then."

***Acacia cretacea* – a new lese of life** **Photo Sandra McKenzie**

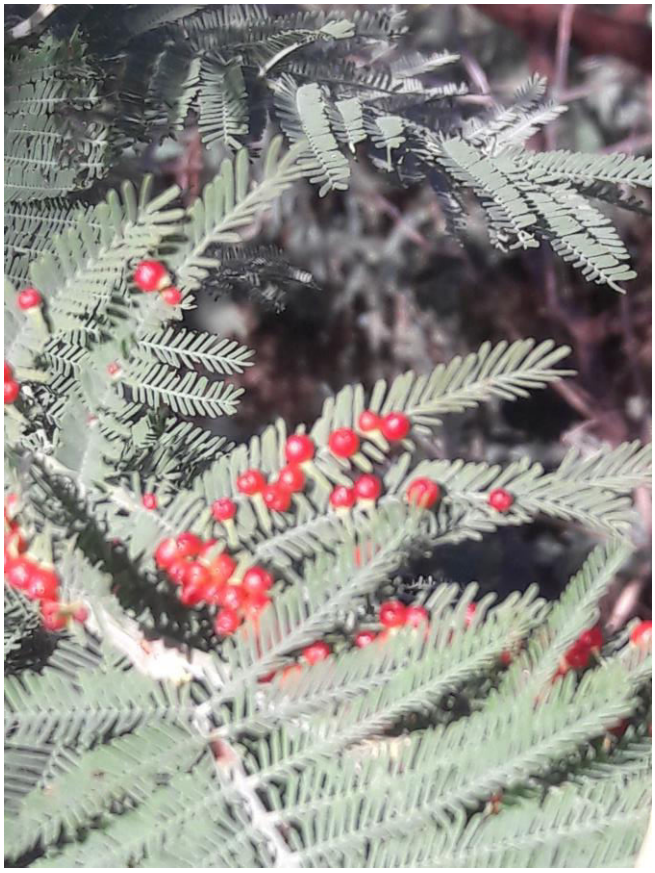
Meanwhile, **Helen van Riet (Wangaratta, Vic)** wrote (2 August 2020) about the plant that she is growing in her garden:

"Our *Acacia cretacea* is responding to rain and lovely sunny days. It's still whippy with a skinny trunk, but fresh new growth is encouraging. It's well above the tree guard now."

***Acacia cretacea* in Helen van Riet's garden**

Gall Midges and Acacias

Bernie Datson (Baranduda, Vic) recently sent me some photos of some galls on an *Acacia dealbata*, and asked for some help in identification.



Galls on *Acacia dealbata* **Photo< Bernie Datson**

Bernie advised that the Acacia is growing in his garden in a clump of planted mixed Acacias under a group of planted Casuarinas and is 3 or 4 years old, 3m tall and fairly shaded. The swellings are 1.5 to 3mm in diameter, the smaller are slightly hollow, the larger more so. Bernie observed that they have widely dispersed white hairs under the binocular microscope and have small hollows or crevices near their tops and the whole surface is covered with minute low pimples. Where the gall attaches to the fine 'leaf' the 'leaf' is widened to about twice its normal width. Some of the galls are more yellowish, some red to orange. No animal life was evident in the cut open galls.

From a search of the Internet, the galls on Bernie's wattle looked to me very much like a species of gall midge called *Austroacacidiplosis botrycephalae*. This species was a new species described in 2012 in the Australian Journal of Entomology, in a paper by Dr Peter Kolesik and Dr Robin Adair. I asked Dr Kolesik if he could confirm this identification of Bernie's gall, and he responded as follows:

"Yes, your ID is correct. It is a gall of *Austroacacidiplosis*

botrycephalae. It occurs in New South Wales and Victoria on *Acacia deanei*, *A. dealbata*, *A. decurrens* and *A. baileyana*."

Dr Kolesik commented on how striking the galls are, and noted that the galls are unusual in that they are a malformation of the leaves (whereas most gall midge galls on Acacias are on flowers).

The genus name, *Austroacacidiplosis*, combines *Austro* for Australia and *Acacidiplosis*, a closely related genus containing 13 species that feed on leaves or flower buds of African acacias in Kenya. The specific name refers to *Botrycephalae*, the *Acacia* section that contains host plants of the species.

The 2012 paper by Kolesik and Adair noted that there are three other genera of gall midges that feed on native acacias in southern Australia – *Dasineura* (Kolesik *et al*. 2005), *Asphondylia* (Kolesik *et al*. 2010), and an undescribed Lasiopteridi genus from branch galls on *Acacia stenophylla*. It was noted that all of the 15 described *Dasineura* and *Asphondylia* species identified in a survey in southern Australia develop galls on reproductive organs (buds, flowers or fruits) of their hosts. Some of these gall midges were being used or considered as biological control agents to restrain the sexual reproduction of Australian wattles in South Africa. *Dasineura dielsi* is used against *Acacia cyclops* and *Dasineura rubiformis* against *Acacia mearnsii*.

References:

Kolesik P, Adair RJ & Eick G. 2005. Nine new species of *Dasineura* (Diptera: Cecidomyiidae) from flowers of Australian *Acacia* (Mimosaceae). *Systematic Entomology* **30**, 454–479.
Kolesik P, Adair RJ & Eick G. 2010. Six new species of *Asphondylia* (Diptera: Cecidomyiidae) damaging flower buds and fruit of Australian *Acacia* (Mimosaceae). *Systematic Entomology* **35**, 250– 267.
Kolesik P & Adair RJ 2012. A new genus of gall midge (Diptera: Cecidomyiidae) from
Australian *Acacia* *Australian Journal of Entomology* **51**, 97–103

Propagating *Acacia glaucoptera* from cuttings

One of my favourite Acacias is *A. glaucoptera*, but I have been conscious for a while that there are different forms of it. I much prefer the smaller growing forms, with smaller phyllodes, and forms that display colourful new foliage.

Way back in 2010 (Newsletter No. 108), that thought was shared by **Jan Hall**, who commented that it was "a mistake to buy the large foliage form which is a small tree – a small prostrate one will go in soon". More recently, **Graeme Nicholls** (Blackburn, Vic) has also expressed the same view, noting that a plant in his garden originally came from a particularly fine small growing form at the Melton Botanic Gardens.

Graeme recently wrote a note for the monthly newsletter of the APS Maroondah District Group, on his efforts in propagating the species from cuttings taken from a plant in his garden. He wrote as follows:

"*Acacia glaucoptera* is common in the Esperance region, WA. Some forms can reach 1.5 m in height, but ours is only about 50 cm. The unusual broad wing-like foliage is most ornamental, especially the new growth which is a deep maroon colour. Mature foliage is blue/grey. Small ball flowers appear along the length of the stems in spring. It seems to grow happily in our clay soil, but it needs good drainage and likes full sun.

Acacias are usually propagated from seed, suitably scarified, but many species can also be reproduced from cuttings, especially those with small inter-nodal spaces.

When it comes to *Acacia glaucoptera*, with its unusual structure of flattened phyllodes hugging the stem, it is not possible to take cuttings in the normal way. I have had success by carefully cutting away the phyllodes on the bottom half of the cuttings with some sharp scissors, leaving a virtual stem. I take about 8 cm of tip growth, trim it as shown in the picture, dip it in rooting hormone, and pot it into a mixture of mainly perlite with a small amount of peat moss, or sometimes seed raising mix.

Our plant was originally grown from a cutting from a plant in the Melton Botanic Garden. My most recent cuttings were taken in mid-July this year and placed on a heated bed. By the end of August they had good roots and were potted on."

***Acacia glaucoptera* cuttings** **Photo: Graeme Nicholls**

I asked Graeme what his main reasons were for propagating it from cuttings rather than seed eg was it because the particular form he is growing is a particularly nice form and

he wanted to get a similarly nice plant, or because he didn't have seeds to grow it from, or because he likes the challenge of growing different plants from cuttings. His response was that he grew it from cuttings for all of those reasons.

One question that I have thought about relates to whether, when growing this species from seed, will the plant that is propagated be of the same form as the parent plant? I assume that this would be the case, but maybe someone can confirm this?

Seed Bank

An updated list of species in our Seed Bank appeared in Newsletter No. 147, May 2020.

Although we do purchase some seed from commercial sources, we also rely upon donations of seed. If you are able to help with any seed donations they would be very welcome (we would ask you to post any donations to Bill Aitchison, who will forward them on to our Seed Bank Curator, Victoria Tanner). It also helps enormously if you are able to clean, sort and label the seed correctly. Also, we would like to have provenance information for all seed in the seed bank – so if you donate any seed, could you also provide any information you have in relation to provenance.

The procedure for requesting seed from the Seed Bank is as follows. Study Group members are entitled to lodge up to 3 orders per member per year, with 10 packets maximum in each order (negotiable). There is a charge of $4 in relation to each order, to cover the cost of a padded post bag and postage. The $4 may be paid in stamps or by direct credit to our Group's bank account. Requests for seed may be lodged in either of the following ways:

1. By email to our Study Group email address, acaciastudygroup@gmail.com (emails to this address go directly to both Victoria and Bill Aitchison). If you make a request by email, you will also need to make the necessary payment by one of the above methods. If you are paying by stamps, these should be mailed to Bill Aitchison, 13 Conos Court, Donvale, Vic 3111
2. By mail (enclosing stamps if required). These requests should be posted to Bill Aitchison (address as in the previous paragraph). Bill will then advise Victoria of the request.

We would like to maintain some data on your results in propagating seed from the Seed Bank. We would therefore ask if you could provide a report on your results, recording information on species, number of seeds sown, number germinated and days after sowing.

Study Group Membership

Acacia Study Group membership is due for renewal each year on 1 July. For the time being, only email membership (newsletter sent by email) will be available to new members. Existing members who receive a hardcopy of the newsletter posted in Australia may continue membership on this basis (subject to possible printing delays because of Covid). The membership fees for 2020-21 are as follows:

$7 (newsletter sent by email)
$10 (hardcopy of newsletter posted in Australia – existing members only)

Thank you to those members who have already paid their membership for this year. If you have not already attended to this, it would be appreciated if you could do so, or alternatively advise if you do not wish to renew your membership.

Subscriptions may be sent to:
Bill Aitchison, 13 Conos Court, Donvale, Victoria 3111

Subscriptions may also be paid directly to our Account at the Bendigo Bank. Account details are:
Account Name: ASGAP Acacia Study Group
BSB: 633-000
Account Number: 130786973

If you pay directly to the Bank Account, please advise us by email (acaciastudygroup@gmail.com).