



*Acacia bruniooides*

Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) Inc.

## ACACIA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER

Group Leader and Newsletter Editor  
Bill Aitchison  
13 Conos Court, Donvale, Vic 3111  
Phone (03) 98723583

Seed Bank Curator  
Victoria Tanner

Email: [acaciastudygroup@gmail.com](mailto:acaciastudygroup@gmail.com)

No. 153 December 2022

ISSN 1035-4638

Contents	Page
<b>From the Leader</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>From Members and Readers</b>	<b>2</b>
<b>The Genome of <i>Acacia pycnantha</i></b>	<b>2</b>
<b><i>Acacia orites</i></b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Some Acacia Identifications</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Wattles at Wartook Gardens</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Pruning of Wattles</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Travels in Queensland</b>	<b>6</b>
<b>Matters Relating to Weeds</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Peter Goldup's Acacias</b>	<b>8</b>
<b>Acacias in the News</b>	<b>10</b>
<b>National Wattle Day Highlights 2022</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Bob Lorensene's Wattle Wood Collection</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Wattles at Panrock Ridge</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Seed Bank</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Study Group Membership</b>	<b>15</b>
<b>Study Group Financial Statement</b>	<b>15</b>

I have recently had the opportunity to do presentations on Acacias to two APS District Groups in Victoria, in the Grampians and in Mildura. My thanks to the members of each of these Groups for being such an enthusiastic audience, and a special thank you to **Neil and Wendy Marriott**, and to **Peter and Marion Lang** for their hospitality.

Our Study Group website address is shown on the left hand side of this page. Note that there has been one minor alteration to the address from that previously shown. This is that 'https' should be used rather than 'http'. The latter may still work but may result in a security error being displayed by web browsers. A lot of work has been done over the last year or so in upgrading and modernising the ANPSA website (which hosts the Acacia Study Group and other Study Group websites, as well as providing a lot of other information), and we should extend our gratitude to all of those involved for the work they have put in and what they have achieved.

Thank you to those members who have provided input to this newsletter. The newsletter relies upon these contributions, whether they be articles or photographs. I am happy to receive contributions at any time, please think about whether you have something you can contribute.

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

<https://anpsa.org.au/acaciaSG>

One of the features of this newsletter is an article by **Suzette Searle**, President of the Wattle Day Association, in which she reports on highlights for the Association in 2022. Our thanks to Suzette for writing this article, and also for the wonderful job that the Association does in promoting National Wattle Day.

A reminder that Study Group memberships are due for renewal on 1<sup>st</sup> July. Details regarding membership renewal are shown on page 15.

Please note that our Study Group's financial statement for the year ending 30 June 2022 is included on page 15 of this newsletter.

Bill Aitchison

### From The Leader

Dear Members

We recently learned of the passing of one of the members of our Study Group, **Barry Teague**, from Swan Hill, Victoria. Barry had been a member of the Acacia Study Group since 2008, and I believe a member of the Australian Plants Society since 1972. Our thoughts are with Elva and the family.

**Acacia Study Group Newsletter No. 153**

**Page 1**

## From Members and Readers

**Des Nelson (Alice Springs, NT)** writes (24 July 2022) as follows:

“Dear Bill  
Here is my subscription for 2022/23 membership. I would like to make a comment on your article “The Smells of Wattles” in the latest newsletter.

From the 1950s to early 1970s I was involved in research pertaining to *Acacia georginae*, “Georgina River Gidgee” in particular to its liability to be toxic to livestock in eastern Central Australia and far western Queensland. As I spent a great deal of time camping in Gidgee country I was familiar with the powerful “gas like” odour from Gidgees. It is produced during wet or just humid weather, emanating from the phyllodes but is also very strong when the trees are in flower. Some of the worst bush fly infestations I have known have been during flowering periods in Gidgee scrub. I wonder if the odour attracts flies for the purpose of pollination. As happens with people who live in Gidgee I got used to the odour and noticed it very little.

The original premises of the Herbarium of the Northern Territory were in a large room of an office complex in Alice Springs, established by George Chippendale in 1954. Having no air conditioning, the Herbarium was subject to prevailing weather conditions. By chance, during one very humid day I found it was possible to bend phyllodes from dry Gidgee specimens into a circle without cracking. This has caused me to speculate that Gidgee, one of the most drought resistant of inland flora species is able to absorb atmospheric moisture hygroscopically.

On a seed collecting job once, I gathered mature but still green pods of *Vachellia farnesiana*, placing them in a sealed plastic bag. Hours later, on opening the bag I was aware that the pods had given off an odour, not quite as strong, but similar to that of the odour of *Acacia georginae*.

All the very best, the newsletter gets more interesting all the time.

Des Nelson

PS: I was George Chippendale’s first assistant, joining the Herbarium in 19956, age 21.”

\*\*\*\*\*

**Jenny Simons (Burradoo, NSW)** wrote (20 August 2022) as follows

“Dear Bill,

I was interested to read about your ‘out of season’ wattles.

I have three wattles in that category that I treasure: *Acacia iteaphylla*, *A. ulicifolia* and *A. glaucoptera*. All three

flower for many months. *A. iteaphylla* begins in March and flowers for six months. *A. ulicifolia* begins in August and flowers for about 10 months. *A. glaucoptera* begins in July and flowers for about 5 months.

Regards,  
Jenny Simons”

## The Genome of *Acacia pycnantha*

In our Study Group Newsletter No. 148 (October 2020) we referred to study being done regarding the genome of the Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*). This work has now been completed and a genome for *A. pycnantha* has been assembled, with the results being published in a recent paper (see reference below).

The paper notes that the work that has been done will be a valuable resource for future studies involving *Acacia*, including the evolution, conservation, breeding, invasiveness and physiology of the genus, and for comparative studies of legumes.

The following are some extracts from a media release from the Royal Botanic Gardens Victoria:

“The golden wattle DNA was sequenced into millions of fragments that were then assembled like a giant jigsaw puzzle using high-performance computing housed in the National Herbarium of Victoria.

Comparative genomics identified suites of gene families in *Acacia pycnantha* that are more diverse with respect to other plants, and which can be associated with greater adaptability. One of these gene families is involved in flowering time and may drive the characteristic synchronous flowering of *Acacia* associated with the onset of spring.

The golden wattle genome was found to be made of 814 million DNA bases (the “letters” that make up DNA) and included nearly 48,000 genes. In comparison, humans have larger genomes with 3.1 billion bases of DNA but fewer (about 20,000) genes.

The next mission for the team that did this work is to investigate the relationships between all wattle species, using the genome to understand the genes involved in the adaptation of wattles to the diverse range of environments in Australia. They are also planning on sequencing many more native Australian plant genomes.”

### Reference:

McLay TGB, Murphy DJ, Holmes GD, Mathews S, Brown GK, Cantrill DJ, et al. (2022) A genome resource for *Acacia*, Australia’s largest plant genus. *PLoS ONE* 17(10): e0274267.

<https://doi.org/10.1371/journal.pone.0274267>

## *Acacia orites*

One of our Study Group members **Darren Williams** is hoping to find some seed of *Acacia orites* - he has never grown it before but is keen to try it. It appears that it is a species that we have never had in our Study Group seed bank, so if anyone is able to help in sourcing some seed, please let me know or alternatively email Darren at [herbalistics@gmail.com](mailto:herbalistics@gmail.com).

Somewhat surprisingly, it is a species that has barely ever rated a mention in our Study Group newsletters – I can only find three past references:

- In Newsletter No. 2 (June 1968) reference was made to it having been named as a new species by Les Pedley (in Notes on Acacia, chiefly from Queensland, 4, pp 32-33, Vol 75 No. 4 (April 1964) Proceedings of the Royal Society of Queensland).
- In Newsletter No. 118 (September 2012), a report on our Study Group Field Trip to the Northern Tablelands of NSW in August of that year noted that we found *A. orites* in an area where it hadn't previously been recorded.
- In Newsletter No. 149 (February 2021) it was noted that it was one of the Acacia species featured in the book Plants of Subtropical Eastern Australia.

*A. orites* is a rainforest tree growing to a height of 30m found in highland rainforest areas of north eastern NSW and south eastern Qld. It is described in Floyd as being “a good fast growing nurse tree”. Perhaps the height of the tree makes seed collection difficult?

It is closely related to *Acacia floribunda*, but it grows taller and has longer phyllodes (10-18cm x 0.4-0.7cm). It has pale yellow rod like flower heads in spring, and in some years these can provide a mass display covering most of the crown.

It does appear to be a somewhat smelly Acacia! Elliot and Jones note that “the flowers and phyllodes exude an unpleasant odour especially during wet weather”. Floyd notes that the bark has “a cucumber-like smell”.

It is reported as being not well known in cultivation, but is a decorative and useful shelter tree for high rainfall areas. Trees have an attractive silhouette, with a cylindrical, non-buttressed trunk and a crown that is usually not very dense. The timber is reported as being brown, medium hard and easily worked, and an excellent cabinet wood.

The species name *orites* comes from the Greek “*oreites*”, meaning a mountaineer, in reference to its occurrence in the higher ranges. Its common name is Mountain Wattle, or Nightcap Wattle (a reference to it being found in the Nightcap Range).

Floyd advises that propagation can be by seed (pour boiling water over the seed and then soak in cold water

overnight) or by root cuttings. Nicholson advises to scarify or briefly boil seed which germinates within days.

### References:

- Elliot, W.R. & Jones, D.L., Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants Vol 2 (1982)  
Floyd, A.G., Rainforest Trees of Mainland South-eastern Australia (rev ed 2008)  
Nicholson, Nan & Hugh, Australian Rainforest Plants III

### Notes:

(1) For those, like me, who may have been unfamiliar with the term “nurse tree”, an Internet search tells me that a nurse tree is a larger, faster-growing tree that shelters a smaller, slower-growing tree or plant. The nurse tree provides shade, shelter from wind, or protection from animals who would feed on the smaller plant.

(2) When the new occurrence record was found on our Study Group field trip in 2012, a collection was made and a specimen was lodged at the N.C.W. Beadle Herbarium at the University of New England (with the collector recorded as Maria Hitchcock). The specimen was recorded as being an upright shrub to 1.5m, non-flowering, and the locality being the Gibraltar Range National Park, Mulligan's Hut track, 6.7km from Ranger's Hut.

## Some Acacia identifications

The following are some recent queries in relation to identification of particular Acacias.

**Royce and Jeanne Raleigh (Wartook, Vic)** forwarded to me the following photo, of an Acacia growing in a neighbour's garden. They describe it as “a beautiful thing in full flower”. I have advised them that I believe it to be *Acacia covenyi*. They are going to try to propagate it – maybe trying both seed and cuttings. Has anyone propagated this species from cuttings?



**Brendon Stahl (Colac, Vic)** recently did a six week caravan trip up to Mudjimba (near Maroochydore) on the Sunshine Coast and on the way home saw lots of Acacias flowering. He admired one in particular when he stopped in the Pilliga Nature Reserve, growing to about 1m tall.

He sent to me the following photo, hoping for an identification. I forwarded it on to **Anthony O'Halloran**, who kindly identified it as *Acacia mariae* (used to be *A. tindalea*). Anthony describes it as “a spectacular gold topped wattle”.



**Alison and Peter Rogers (Wantirna, Vic)** have an *Acacia* in their garden that commenced flowering in April. Their plant is about 2.5m high and was sold to them as *Acacia beckleri*. But there was some discussion as to whether this was the correct identification – the doubt arising because the flower heads did not appear as large as they may have expected with this species. As a result, **Geoff Lay** took a specimen away and keyed it out. Geoff reported as follows:

“The plant was *Acacia beckleri* subsp. *beckleri*. This grows from the Eyre Peninsula in SA through to Broken Hill in NSW. A separate subspecies with larger flower heads which only grows in the Flinders Ranges has been separated off. This is *Acacia beckleri* subsp. *megaspherica*, and being more showy is the one more likely to have been seen in the trade.”

If you wish to read further re the two subspecies, see [https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/Content/Publications/JABG22P063\\_OLeary.pdf](https://data.environment.sa.gov.au/Content/Publications/JABG22P063_OLeary.pdf)

## Wattles at Wartook Gardens

**Royce and Jeanne Raleigh (Wartook, Vic)** have shared some photos of wattles that were currently or had just finished flowering in their garden (as at 23 August 2022). They note that their wattles were lovely this year. They

had had good rains (but at that time not enough to get their little creek flowing) - but more recently it has been very wet (for those who know the Grampians, Royce advises that the road between Wartook and Halls Gap had been closed). Royce notes that it was not just the wattles that flowered well this year, but also Hakeas and Melaleucas were especially good.

*Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze' – This has flowered beautifully this year. The plants that Royce and Jeanne originally had set seed which they collected and propagated from. They have also had seedlings coming up naturally in the garden. All of these plants, both propagated and occurring naturally, have all come true to colour. The oldest specimen which they now have is about 20 years old. Royce recommends that this plant is best kept in a sheltered position out of the wind – perhaps not an issue so much for people living in built up urban areas, but more relevant in an open country situation such as theirs.



*Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze'

*Acacia vestita* – this has beautiful weeping foliage, the dense foliage is suggested as making it an excellent screening plant or low windbreak – the photo below would support this claim. Royce suggests that this species needs a bit of room to show itself off properly – they have 2 plants both about 5-6m across, and growing by the road where they can be admired by people passing by.



*Acacia vestita*

*Acacia merinthophora* – this also has weeping foliage but is more open. I found a nursery in California advertising it for sale, and on their website they comment that it is grown commercially for cut foliage, and also that it is beautiful grown against a wall to show up the light foliage. Royce and Jeanne have one growing by a pond where it has its roots under concrete. It is the best one they have ever had and they wonder if maybe it is getting trace elements from the concrete?



*Acacia merinthophora*

*Acacia lanuginophylla* (Woolly Wattle) – this is called the Woolly Wattle because its branchlets, phyllodes and pods are densely woolly (*lanuginophylla* means “very woolly”). I note that the website of the WA Botanical Gardens and Parks Authority comments that this species grows up to 1.5m high but can be pruned to keep to 1m if desired - but says this is unusual as most wattles don't respond well to pruning (<https://www.bgpa.wa.gov.au/about-us/conservation/plant-of-the-month/1988-june-2015>). (See note below on Pruning of Wattles).



*Acacia lanuginophylla*

*Acacia varia* – Royce and Jeanne especially like this species and note that it flowers early in winter. It sets copious amounts of seed and spreads in the garden. They find that some of the seedlings are better than the original.



*Acacia varia*

*Acacia calamifolia* – Royce and Jeanne advise that this was one of Fred Rogers' favourites, and they got their original plant from him many years ago – they lost this original plant but seedlings came up.



*Acacia calamifolia*

Two other Acacias which have done well this year at Wartook Gardens are:

*Acacia denticulosa* – The flowers on these wattles did not last as long this year as usual, but the plants now have a lot of seed on them. Royce notes that they have 2 plants side by side, and suggests that this may contribute to the high production of seed.

*Acacia lasiocarpa* – This flowered well, a beautiful small rounded shrub about 1m across.

## Pruning of Wattles

by Bill Aitchison

I was interested in the reference to pruning on the BGPA website (see the notes on *Acacia lanuginophylla* above) – where it notes that this species can be pruned to keep it to 1m if desired, but says that this is unusual as most wattles don't respond well to pruning.

I asked Royce Raleigh about his and Jeanne's approach to pruning their wattles. He advised that they do prune their wattles, especially if they are scraggy and especially lower growing ones. They don't particularly prune the bigger ones, although they do take a few bits off their *Acacia leprosa* 'Scarlet Blaze'.

The following are a couple of references to pruning of Acacias:

In the Encyclopaedia of Australian Plants Vol.2, Elliot and Jones state: “Acacias respond favourably to pruning immediately after flowering, and if carried out regularly this can extend the life of the plants.”

In Growing Acacias, Marion Simmons recommends regularly tip pruning young wattles to encourage more compact bushes, and to prune regularly after flowering, unless seeds are required. She notes that regular pruning will promote more prolific flowering and will help prolong the life of the plant. She suggests that older acacias which have become too large or leggy should be pruned with care.

Perhaps other members may wish to share their thoughts on pruning of wattles – please let me have your comments.

## Travels in Queensland

**Graham and Gloria Bower (Mitcham, Vic)** recently did a trip to Queensland (as it seems many Victorians did during winter). Along their journey they took a number of Acacia photos, not all of which have been identified – so if anyone would like to add an identification, or correct an ID shown below, please let me know.

In Cunnamulla (31 July 2022) they came across the Gidgee Bean Café (photo below), and wondered which Acacia species this may refer to. There are a lot of Acacias called Gidgee, including *A. cambagei*, *A. loderi* (Broken Hill gidgee), *A. calcicola* (Myall gidgee), *A. georginae* (Georgina gidgee), *A. argyrodendron* (Black gidgee), *A. pruinocarpa* (Gidgee) and *A. crombei* (Pink gidgee). Graham and Gloria noted that only *A. cambagei* and *A. argyrodendron* were mentioned in information available locally in Cunnamulla, so they assume that the name of the café most likely refers to one of these species.



Gidgee Bean Café, Cunnamulla

The following photo was taken in Tregole National Park (5 August 2022) – possibly *Acacia harpophylla*?



Tregole National Park, possibly *A. harpophylla*

On the same day (5 August 2022) and also in Tregole NP, they photographed the following (thought to be mulga, in the *Acacia aneura* family).



Mulga, Tregole NP

On 6 August 2022, travelling between Injune and Rolleston, they photographed a beautiful wattle, thought to be *Acacia macradenia*, the zig zag wattle.



*Acacia macradenia*

On 8 August 2022, they found an attractive wattle in Carnarvon Gorge NP – maybe *Acacia podalyriifolia*? They note that in the NP they did not find a single plant labelled anywhere, which they found disappointing.



Carnarvon Gorge NP, maybe *Acacia podalyriifolia*

On 22 August 2022 they found a number of wattles around Ballandean, in the Granite Belt of southern Queensland. Three of these are shown below.



Ballandean, species not identified



Ballandean, maybe *Acacia nerifolia*?



Ballandean, *Acacia pruinosa*

## Matters relating to Weeds

The Friends of the Box-Ironbark Forests ([www.fobif.org.au](http://www.fobif.org.au)) is a local community group of volunteers who work towards protecting and conserving natural vegetation in the Box and Ironbark forests and woodlands of central Victoria.

One of the wattles that occurs naturally in that area is *Acacia dealbata* (Silver Wattle). But in the same area, another wattle, *A. baileyana* (Cootamundra Wattle), has invaded areas of local bushland. This *Acacia* is native only to a small area west of Cootamundra in central NSW but has been introduced as a garden plant in many areas outside its natural range.

The FOBIF have recently highlighted a serious problem that is occurring. This is that the weedy *A. baileyana* is crossing with the naturally occurring *A. dealbata*, with the result that seeds produced by the *A. dealbata* may no longer produce seedlings of *A. dealbata*, but the seedlings are likely to be a cross between the two. The FOBIF describe it as “like a feral bull getting into a cattle breeding stud with no morning after pill available.”

The Friends have recently produced a flyer which highlights this problem (headed Cootamundra Wattle Harms Our Local Natives). This flyer urges people to not plant *A. baileyana*, to remove any plants on their own property and to ask relevant authorities to remove any plants on public property. The flyer provides information on how to distinguish *A. baileyana* and *A. dealbata*, It notes that hybrids have characteristics of both species.

\*\*\*\*\*

Another weed item, again relating to *Acacia dealbata*, but where this is actually the weed.

This wattle has been introduced to various countries overseas, and has been declared as invasive in regions across five different continents, including southern Europe, South Africa, Madagascar, California, New Zealand, India and Chile. The results of some recent research in Chile, which looked at rivers as a potential dispersal agent, has been published (See Reference 1. below). In Chile, *A. dealbata* is very abundant along banks and floodplains, suggesting that rivers act as a vector for seed dispersal (this is referred to as hydrochory, which means the dispersal of seeds by water).

This research strongly suggested that rivers can act as a dispersal agent for *A. dealbata* seeds, and that this could be one trait explaining the species' high invasiveness. One trait measured was the buoyancy of seeds and pods, and this qualified the seed propagules as “good floaters”, thereby helping seeds to travel further. The research also showed that seeds have the ability to germinate after considerable period of immersion in water.

It is noted that to achieve higher rates of germination, seeds still need to be scarified.

Some further notes:

(a) The authors note that the seeds used in their work had a mean weight of 7mg (which they compare with 11mg mean in other databases). (In fact some Australian Seed suppliers selling seeds of *Acacia dealbata* provide seed weights on their websites – Nindethana and The Seed Shed quote 70 seeds per gram (ie about 14mg per seed), and RP Seeds quote 49 seeds per gram (ie about 20mg per seed). The authors suggest that their lower mean seed weight could reflect either a selection of small seed sizes in riparian sites, or else could simply be a characteristic feature of this species in Chile), Maybe Study Group members may like to suggest explanations for this apparent variation in the weight of seeds of this species?

(b) The authors note in their paper that some researchers have suggested that hydrochory is evident for many Australian acacias, but that this hypothesis has not been tested – except for the recent discovery of hydrochory in *Acacia stenophylla* (see Reference 2 below).

### References:

1. Zamorano D, Labra FA, Vila I, Meier CI (2022) Rivers as a potential dispersing agent of the invasive tree *Acacia dealbata*. *Revista Chilena de Historia Natural* 95:6
2. Murray BF, Reid MA, Capon SJ, Thoms M, Wu S (2019) Gene flow and genetic structure in *Acacia stenophylla* (Fabaceae): Effects of hydrological connectivity. *J Biogeogr* jbi.13566

## Peter Goldup's Acacias

**Peter Goldup (Mt Evelyn, Vic)** has previously shared with us photos of Acacias that he has been developing, and he has again given us a look at some of his recent work.

He wrote (16 August 2022) as follows:

“I thought I would send you some snaps of some of the colour variants I have at the moment, while they are flowering this year.

Still a way to go in getting smaller forms, although these are hardy enough. The new forms from last year have not flowered yet to compare them and, yes, still working on this project.”

Peter has put together a collage of his photos, and this is shown at the end of this Newsletter on page 16. I agree with him that the photos look great presented in this manner.

Peter also noted that he has some more dwarf forms this year including a possible *A. cognata* 'Lime Magik' prostrate form.



He also provided the photo below of a dwarf multi coloured form of *A. baileyana* (looking stunning in August). The photo also includes in the right front a dwarf lemon fine leafed *A. cognata* which he expected to flower this year (later than the normal *A. cognata*).



Multicoloured *A. baileyana*



*Acacia cognata* with multi-coloured new growth

He also provided photos of a prostrate *A. cognata* with multicoloured new growth – the picture (above) shows the whole plant.

In a subsequent email (8 Sept 2022), Peter provided more pictures of Acacia flowering this year. He wrote:

“Thought I would send you a few more pictures. The Acacias this year are really flowering in abundance, the best for a few years I think. For me personally it is always interesting as some flower for the first time ever and you have been waiting to see just what the flowers will be colour wise etc. I am probably repeating a few, but there you go.

We have here... *Acacia pravissima* compact, *A. baileyana* miniature, *A. howittii* dwarf, *A. leprosa* x *howittii* another red small one. *A. floribunda* x *cognata*, *A. cognata* lemon fine leafed form.”





## Acacias in the news

**Sheryl Backhouse** noted an ABC report on 23 August 2022, **After planting thousands of wattles, farm goes from “bare paddocks” to teeming with wildlife.**

The report noted that Mikla Lewis’s farm near Grenfell, NSW, is now an oasis for nearly 200 different native animals.

<https://www.abc.net.au/news/rural/2022-08-23/wattles-planting-nsw-farm-revitalise-bare-paddocks-wildlife/101356662>

# National Wattle Day Highlights in 2022

By Suzette Searle, President, Wattle Day Association

This year the National Wattle Day (NWD) celebrations organised by the Wattle Day Association (WDA) had an extra buzz. It was the 30th anniversary of the Governor-General's declaration on 23 June 1992, 'that 1 September in each year shall be observed as "National Wattle Day" throughout Australia and in the external Territories of Australia'.

Six years later, in 1998, Jack Fahy formed the Wattle Day Association with other like-minded people in Canberra, because no one seemed to be doing anything about celebrating this newly proclaimed national day of joy and unity. Twenty-four years later the Association is still going strong. The WDA website and Facebook page are recognised as reliable sources of information linked from the PM&C website. They include suggested activities and resources for schools (<http://www.wattleday.asn.au/for-schools>) about the national day (poetry, songs, activities and games, posters and brochures) and every day news that relates to wattle as an increasing popular symbol of Australia. We also promote awareness that *Acacia pycnantha* (Golden Wattle) is Australia's national floral emblem, and that wattles in general are symbols of Australia. The National Library of Australia includes numerous snapshots of the WDA website in its Trove archived webpage collection (<https://webarchive.nla.gov.au/awa/20020331023216/http://wattleday.asn.au/>).

Every year the Wattle Day Association organises activities such as wattle walks and talks, tree plantings, wattle-themed citizenship ceremonies, school talks and the annual presentation of a basket of wattle to the Governor-General of Australia on behalf of the children of Australia. This year the presentation at Government House, Canberra included the 60-member ACT Primary Concert Choir singing songs that included the 'Wattle Song'. This was written by Her Excellency Mrs Linda Hurley in 2020 and the lyrics and music are available at <http://www.wattleday.asn.au/for-schools/songs>

In 2020, thanks to Mike Gilmour who lives in Brisbane, WDA expanded its on-the-ground-activities to Queensland. Activities have included the lighting up of landmarks from Brisbane to Townsville, wattle walks and talks. Sponsorship for online media promotion, badges and t-shirts, banners and brochures from Open Minds (formerly the Qld Wattle Day League formed in 1912) has been invaluable. This year the Governor of Queensland, Dr Jeanette Young AC PSM, and the Lord Mayor of Brisbane, Cr Adrian Schinnerer planted trees at schools in celebration of the 30th anniversary. The Brisbane City Council and the Queensland State Government lit up Government House and bridges in green and gold over the Brisbane River.

In addition to distributing brochures about wattle and NWD, the Association writes opinion pieces for print and broadcast media. This year's NWD article was titled, 'Sept 1 is National Wattle Day – spread the vibe' and there were a number of follow-up radio interviews as a result. We also promote the increasing number of wattle-related activities happening around Australia on our website ('2022 "Week of the Wattle" around Australia') such as open gardens, bike rides and wattle walks the bush, in national parks, farmland plantings, arboretums and botanic gardens and market stalls, plant nursery-based events, community tree plantings and wattle springtime festivals.



Blake Kuiper has just set up the Selfie Spot as part of the WDA's Wattle Corner at the Village Centre National Arboretum Canberra 27 Aug 2022



Bob Lorensene's Wattle Wood Collection on display at Wattle Corner National Arboretum Canberra 27 Aug. 2022

## The WDA's 2022 Golden Wattle Award

The Golden Wattle Award, first announced in 2011, this year recognised the bravery and heroic actions of the Lismore Community who came together at the worst of times to look after each other during the February and March floods. Our media release read:

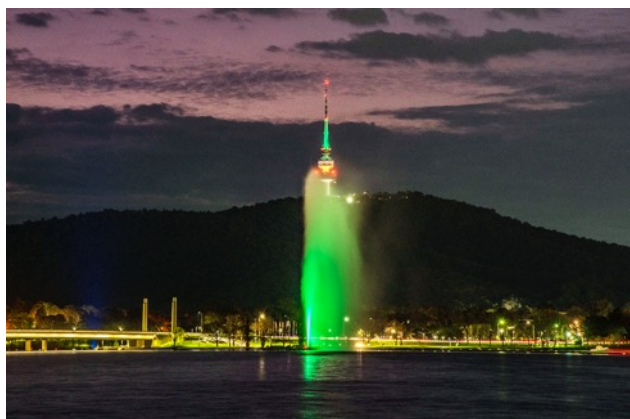
**“They are an inspiration to the rest of the Australian community. The Golden Wattle Award is recognition of their courage and resilience during the recent flood events and the recovery that is still ongoing.”**

**The heroes are too many to be named individually, but standout groups include the ‘Tinny Brigade’ for their rescues and transport of essential goods, the ‘Mud Army’ for their on the ground assistance, the ABC North Coast for providing a communications network, the Lismore City Council staff and Councillors for providing emergency relief, the local businesses who ensured essential supplies, the many service and community groups, the unsung silent individuals who provided support, safety and services”.**

Mayor Steve Krieg accepted the award on behalf of the community from WDA Vice-President Mike Gilmour on 8 September 2022.



L to R: WDA Vice-President Mike Gilmour presents the 2022 Golden Wattle Award to the Mayor of Lismore, Steve Krieg in Lismore's main street on 8 Sept 2022



Telstra Tower lifts off from jet in green and gold ©Howard Moffat Wattle Day, Canberra 1 Sept 2022

## Lighting up in Green and Gold for National Wattle Day

The lighting up of local landmarks in green and gold by city councils around Australia and the National Capital Authority and ACT Government in Canberra was initiated by the WDA in 2020 during the COVID-19 pandemic. These night-time delights continued in 2022 in Perth, Brisbane and Canberra to celebrate the 30th Anniversary.



Matagarup Bridge Perth Photo: Main Roads WA

## Australian posts overseas promote the 30th Anniversary of National Wattle Day

This year for the first time, the WDA approached the Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade to distribute an article and photographs for the 30th Anniversary of National Wattle Day (Thursday 1 September 2022) through its network overseas.

By the 2nd September many members including Australian embassies in Brazil, the USA, the EU, Mexico, Taipei, Chennai, Mauritius, Germany, Malta, Morocco, Sweden and Cyprus had opted to share the National Wattle Day 30th Anniversary content or use their own photographs on both Facebook (14 posts) and Twitter (10). This resulted in 600,000 combined views.

## Citizenship ceremonies with a wattle welcome

The ACT Government arranged for two citizenship ceremonies on 1 September (NWD) this year with guest speaker Terry Fewtrell (WDA Secretary and former President for 12 years). Terry's inspiring welcome speech to new Australian citizens and other resources for citizenship ceremonies are available for all to use at: <http://www.wattleday.asn.au/about-wattle-day/citizenship-ceremonies>

Members of the Wattle Day Association have been present at citizenship ceremonies in Canberra since 1999 to welcome new Australians citizens with a sprig of wattle. Terry's speech of welcome has been a popular addition to the ceremonies held in springtime.



Terry Fewtrell (WDA Secretary and former President) at the podium for a Citizenship Ceremony at Albert Hall Canberra 1 Sept. 2022

## Presentation to the Wattle Day Association by the Governor-General of Australia

To thank all involved in the Wattle Day Association for their promotion of the celebration of National Wattle Day, His Excellency, the Governor-General of Australia, Mr David Hurley presented the Association with a print of the botanical watercolour painting by Heidi Venamore. The original painting of the Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) and the Queen Elizabeth II Rose, a new hybrid tea rose, especially bred to mark Queen Elizabeth's 70 years on the throne, was presented to her Majesty for her Platinum Jubilee. This symbolic and personal gift to her Majesty apparently hung in her study at Balmoral Castle until her passing on 8 September 2022.

The National Wattle Day ceremony at Government House Canberra can be viewed on the Facebook page for the Governor-General of Australia:

<https://m.facebook.com/100044192031341/>

## 35th Anniversary of national floral emblem – *Acacia pycnantha* - coming up

The WDA has been ensuring the availability of *Acacia pycnantha* seed and seedlings for the 35th Anniversary plantings of Australia's national floral emblem in 2023. For example, in collaboration with the Friends of the National Arboretum the WDA members helped collect, and package *Acacia pycnantha* seed for sale at the Curatoreum gift shop at the arboretum.

Golden Wattle (*Acacia pycnantha*) seed for sale was collected in December 2021 from the Golden Wattle Garden of more than 120 *A. pycnantha* trees planted there in 2018 to showcase Australia's national floral emblem.

## Bob Lorensene's Wattle Wood Collection

by Bill Aitchison

As noted above by Suzette Searle, this collection of turned wattle wood was placed on public display by the Wattle Day Association at their Wattle Corner stall at the National Arboretum, Canberra, on the weekend of 27<sup>th</sup> and 28<sup>th</sup> August. This was the first time the collection was placed on public display since Bob (who is an *Acacia* Study Group member) donated the collection in 2021 to Suzette Searle, President, WDA.

Bob is happy to add to the collection with additional species and will turn more pieces if he can source the wood required. I recently visited Bob in his workshop and he turned an additional 3 pieces (the wood coming from prunings and fallen branches from plants in my garden).

If any Study Group members have pieces of wattle wood that they would be happy to donate to help add to the collection, please let me know – I can check whether they are species not yet represented in the collection, and liaise with Bob and Suzette. The pieces of wood do not need to



Suzette Searle, President WDA, with the painting at Government House just after the presentation by His Excellency David Hurley 31 August 2022

be particularly large – Bob can work with relatively small prunings.



Bob Lorensene turning wattle at his lathe

Bob has also enthusiastically supported National Wattle Day. He is now living in a retirement hostel, and to celebrate National Wattle Day at the hostel, he did a talk on wattles to interested residents at the hostel. This was very successful, with about 30-35 enthusiastic attendees. Bob made use of some laminated photos that I provided to him (these had mainly come from Acacia Study Group displays at some past ANPSA National Conferences). Bob's talk was so popular that he was then asked to repeat the presentation at another retirement hostel.

## Wattles at Panrock Ridge

by Bill Aitchison

Those Study Group members who attended our 2017 Grampians Field Trip will recall that the weekend began with a wander around Wendy's Wattle Walk – this being a wattle collection that **Wendy Marriott** has established on her and Neil's property at Panrock Ridge.

I recently had the opportunity to have another look at this great collection of wattles. A few notable ones were:

*Acacia notabilis* – this was particularly striking with its blue green phyllodes, golden yellow flowers, and reddish stems.

*Acacia consobrina* – In our Newsletter No. 141 (June 2018) Warren Sheather recommended this wattle, noting

it as a spreading shrub that reaches a height of about one metre and a spread of at least two metres. It was one of the outstanding wattles on Wendy's Wattle Wslk.

*Acacia covenyi* – Wendy's plant is still not that large – but a few days ago I visited one of our Study Group members Max McDowall and observed his *A. covenyi* (finished flowering) but about 6-7m high.



*Acacia notabilis*



*Acacia consobrina*



*Acacia covenyi*

I was also interested in two other observations on Wendy's wattles. One was that they have experienced wattle tick scale on *A. dictyoneura*. I found this interesting because this is one of only a very few Acacia species in

our garden for which we have had this scale – maybe suggesting that there is something with this species that makes it attractive to scale? The other observation was that Wendy’s *Acacia muelleriana* suckers – not something we have observed in our garden.

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

## Seed Bank

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](mailto:acaciastudygroup@gmail.com). If you make a

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.

## Study Group Membership

**Acacia Study Group membership for 2022/23 is as follows:**

**\$7 (newsletter sent by email)**

**\$10 (hardcopy of newsletter posted in Australia – existing members only)**

**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](mailto:acaciastudygroup@gmail.com)).**

<b>ANPSA ACACIA STUDY GROUP FINANCIAL BALANCE SHEET 2021-2022</b>			
<b>INCOME</b>	<b>Balance at 1.7.21</b>		\$780.78
	Members’ subs	\$828.00	
	Donations	\$159.00	
	Seed bank purchases	\$16.00	
	<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$1003.00</b>	<b>\$1003.00</b>
<b>EXPENSES</b>	Stationery	\$4.84	
	Printing	\$518.00	
	Postage	\$136.40	
	<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$659.24</b>	<b>-\$659.24</b>
<b>BALANCE</b>	<b>Balance at 30.6.22</b>		\$1124.54



**Colour variants of *Acacia leprosa* x *howittii* seedlings, a compilation from Peter Goldup**