



the Propagator

International Plant Propagators' Society
Australian Region - Newsletter Autumn 2008 - No: 17

OPPORTUNITY THROUGH DIVERSITY

The conference theme: "Opportunity Through Diversity", sounds a bit to me like "don't put all your eggs in one basket". I wondered what this conference was to be about ... then the registration details came and I understood.

In the business world people talk about vertical integration where you take on more things done by others in the supply chain, and horizontal integration where you broaden your product range into related areas based on your strengths. As well as being based on more of the latter, the conference program covers aspects of what we can learn from others in different fields of horticulture in Australia and around the world.

I wondered what Peter Hatch may have to say to the group as opening speaker. He has written articles and books on the Monticello gardens in Virginia which were established by Thomas Jefferson. Thomas Jefferson looked for opportunities in horticulture for the new colony. The gardens have many of the old varieties of apple, grape and other plants as well as species collected across America which were necessary for new industries. Jefferson took copious notes on the culture of 250 vegetable and 170 fruit varieties. It is probably fitting that Clive Blazey the Digger's Club founder will then also be able to talk about the value of plant diversity.

In the youth diversity sessions our younger members will report on what they have found in their own work or through exchange and study tour programs in South Africa and the United States. State Industry Development Officers will also review water usage and irrigation practice in the session on water diversity.

Then we will hear about specialist breeding efforts in different sectors as we explore breeding diversity. These include Lavender, perennials, blueberries, and maintaining genetic diversity of native plants. Breeding efforts for those expensive truffles sounds interesting.

The next day after the AGM we will have a busy day visiting five top horticultural enterprises. Along with the tours this year there will be specialist workshops on budding, measuring your irrigation and sharpening your tools.

As always, there are people at the conference with the expertise and experience who will assist you to solve the diverse problems or offer helpful suggestions. All you need to do is ask. Consider every problem an opportunity. There is even a session dealing with Solutions to our everyday problems (there will be a question box).

The session on future opportunities will cover areas of micropropagation, fertilizer mixing, and the future of propagation media. The Specialist opportunities session will look at case studies.

The conference certainly should show us how diverse our industry is. I guess we will all have to find out more about these opportunities for diversity ... I hope to see you at the conference.

- Bruce Higgs

The conference venue - York on Lilydale, cnr York and Swansea Roads, Mt Evelyn Victoria. See for more information: <http://www.yorktaverner.com.au/main.html>



President's Comment

Despite the holiday period there has been quite a lot of activity behind the scenes at IPPS Australian region. Since my last report there has been two teleconferences involving the board, during which a number of administrative and policy matters were discussed.



The search for a venue to stage the 2011 conference in New South Wales is underway. This is an important decision as it will be Australia's turn to host the International board and the International president will also be an Australian. We need to ensure that we are able to stage an event that will attract as many overseas visitors as possible as well as giving them an experience they will never forget.

There has been a change in IPPS International representation with Greg McPhee finishing his tenure on the International board and our alternate director, Clive Larkman moving to that position. I will now take up the position of alternate director and both Clive and I will attend the International Board meeting and the pre conference tour in New Zealand just after our own conference in May.

There are a number of changes underway internationally which no doubt Clive will report on, but most importantly the need for a focused effort to attract new members to the association is one of the main priorities. Australia has a reputation for innovation in this cause and hopefully we will be able assist in the implementation of a strategy to carry out this initiative.

You will receive in the mail information relating to the Annual General Meeting to be held in conjunction with this year's conference at Lilydale, Victoria in early May. Included will be nomination forms for positions on the board due to the normal retirement of some current directors. I urge you to consider giving some time to the Association in one of these positions; you will find you will get as much back as you are prepared to put into this interesting organisation.

On the subject of the May conference, this looks like being an excellent few days and has been well organized by Andrew Matthews and his team, I am sure that we will all enjoy it, particularly the technical side and the opportunity to catch up with other propagators. If you haven't booked, be quick as there has been a lot of interest from members and others in attending.

Currently, we have an exchange with South Africa in progress and our nominee, Nathan Sparkes from Jamberoo Nursery is there at the moment. We will be receiving their nominee just before conference and he will become one of the Six Pack. We are indebted to Greg and Lindy McPhee for all the work they have put into once again organising this exchange.

I look forward to seeing you all at Lilydale.

- David Cliffe

Executive Officer's Comment

It is hard to believe that we are already a quarter of the way into 2008.



MEMBERSHIP SUBSCRIPTION

RENEWALS – Yes, it is that time of the year again. *A big thank-you to members who have forwarded payments.* A friendly reminder to everyone else, could you please tend to this matter at your earliest convenience. If you are having difficulty in paying your subscription (for whatever reason), please feel free to contact me so that we can discuss alternative payment options.

Yes at last it is our turn to receive some much needed *'liquid sunshine'*, and unfortunately, some areas are experiencing flooding.

CONTACT DETAIL CHANGES

This year a *Member Info Sheet* was forwarded to all Members so that I could be notified of any changed contact details. Thank-you to all those Members who took the time to make corrections and forward the sheet back to me. It is important that the International database records are kept *'up to date'*, otherwise you could be missing out on receiving information.

FINANCIALS

The IPPS Auditor is in the process of preparing *'end of year'* financial accounts and this report will be presented at the AGM.

As at 31st January 2008 the Society had a bank balance of \$57,233.90

MEMBERSHIP

At present the Australian Region of IPPS has 249 members.

IPPS OFFICE

I have been kept quite busy with *'day-to-day'* running of the IPPS Office as well as subscription renewals, membership enquiries and registrations for the Melbourne conference in May '08.

- Pam Langley

International Directors Report

It is mid March and I am working hard with our local committee to help make this year's conference a real winner. To keep the time pressure up, four days after the Melbourne conference finishes we are off to New Zealand for our international board meeting and tour. At this meeting we will be nominating Greg McPhee as second Vice President for 2009. This of course leads up to him being International President in 2011.

Congratulations to Greg for taking on this role. I am sure he will continue with the great job he did as International Director.

With the advent of the internet we are able to continually perform as a functioning board throughout the whole year. I can appreciate how hard it must have been for the International Board to really do things when even phone conferences were a rarity. Of course this has meant that our roles on the International Board are far more demanding.

At last year's meeting we set membership as a high priority. As a Society we need to both recruit new members and also need to ensure we offer enough benefits to retain our current members. As such we are undertaking an audit of what each region does to recruit new members and satisfy the needs of current members. We are also surveying why members do not renew across the whole Society.

I have been given a couple of portfolios: Education Committee. We have to look at developing guidelines for a propagator exchange program – something David Cliffe and Greg McPhee have been strong supporters of. We are also hoping to work out some costings for production of training videos – a great way to spread the word about IPPS. The other portfolio is the core of the membership committee. One of the projects we are hoping to launch soon is an IPPS blog. Keep a check on the web site for a link.

Another initiative that has finally come to fruition is the 'Membership at Large' region. We often have inquiries from people in parts of the world where there are no current regions. They are not keen to join in a country that they have no real connection with so have often been in limbo. Now they can join the membership at large and receive many of the benefits we take for granted.

Have you checked out our websites? Please do. On the international site there is a listing of past proceedings that are available for order.

Have you booked for Melbourne yet? If not go and do so straight away.

- Clive Larkman

A word from the International President

Greetings from New Zealand at the start of a New Year where much of N.Z. is experiencing very dry conditions some of us are in a 150 year drought, water and watering systems stretched to its limit. This certainly sorts out the tough plants from those that don't do so well in such dry conditions and those that hate artificial watering. It is a good indicator for selecting those plants to propagate for dry conditions.

The N.Z. international conference is well organised with some great scenic venues and amazing plants and nurseries.

The Buzzy word for strong roots on hard to root cuttings is "honey" this will Bee on the menu for those impossible to strike plants. Plant propagating is exciting, get out there and spread the word, entrap, snare, enroll those new members just get out there and do it. The board have plenty of ideas and are working toward some revolutionary answers.

Terry Hatch

Organizing the 2008 conference (1st – 4th May)

It's incredible how time flies. Only a few weeks to go and we'll see the results of our planning come together.

Two years ago I agreed to organize the conference. I had never organized one before, but was confident of the support I'd receive from other members. This support has materialised and we are working on the finer details of the conference at the moment.

We have a great team putting it all together: Andrew and Sue Mathews, Clive and Di Larkman, David and Di Daly (see photo below).

We chose a venue out of the city, in the beautiful Yarra Valley, Victoria's prime horticultural region. The venue itself won't accommodate all the guests, so we'll run some buses from nearby motels. A small price to pay for a country setting instead of the city, and close to the site visits.

The program is packed full of interesting speakers, from overseas, interstate and local. Finding speakers wasn't a problem. We had the reverse problem, and had to be disciplined and only accept papers that fitted the theme and topics. I'm sure some of these people will present at future conferences.

Besides the main event we've organized a short pre and post conference tour and an accompanying persons program.

Andrew Mathews
Conference Chairperson



Membership Committee

Hi to all and Happy New Year. I hope you are spreading the word of IPPS. I know too well that we are all busy and the year goes too quickly, but along the way if you have the chance to mention IPPS to anyone at all, do so, and follow up by organizing a Membership Folder from Pam or the Membership Committee.

To make it a little easier we are organizing larger numbers of our "Benefits Of Being A Member" leaflet, so we can distribute them further (e.g. Colleges; Production Nurseries, Specialist Plant Groups). Our Banner Boards are also being displayed at Melbourne, Sydney and Brisbane Trade days thanks to some Members.

Don't forget membership is open to people of all ages, as long as they are connected with plant growing, ... including Teaching, Research, Tissue Culture etc.

We are holding our membership numbers with a few leaving because of age or change of lifestyle, but new members are joining. Unfortunately, because of change of direction, Kathy Mullins, one of our Membership Committee, has resigned and we will need to appoint another member at the Melbourne Conference to take her place. It would be good if we could find someone from South Australia, preferably the Adelaide area.

Following is our Membership Committee:

Michael Gleeson	(Sydney)
Henry Boogaard	(Perth)
Daniel Mansfield	(Melbourne)
Robert Percy	(Sunshine Coast, QLD)
Wayne Stephens	(Lismore. North N.S.W.)
David Ponman - Chairman	(Newcastle - Home of The Jets Soccer Team)

This is my last term as Membership Committee Chairman, a new Chairman will take over at the May Meeting in Melbourne. I have completed 2 terms as a Director and Membership Chairman and it is time for some new blood. We have achieved some new ideas and promotions over the last four years and I would like to thank my Committee Members for their help.

I mentioned earlier, time goes quickly and we need to juggle some chores in-between our work load. However, I encourage members to put their hand up to help, as I have found it very rewarding and interesting being involved in the running of the Society by holding a position.

Thank you for giving me the opportunity of this term, as a Director. I.P.P.S. has helped me gain knowledge over the 20 plus years that I have been a member and I am pleased to be able to help, as I believe in the ideals of the Society and I have made many friends and learnt from attending conferences.

Don't forget to promote IPPS seek and share, keep contact with members, especially new members and

take advantage of information available to you through IPPS.

See you in Melbourne.

David Ponman
Membership Committee Chairman

South Africa Exchange 2008



IPPS Australia and IPPS Southern Africa regions run an exchange program. The intent is to have propagators at the start of their career gain experience of each other's industry and to build a better understanding of each country. So far it has been a great success.

This year Nathan Sparkes from the South Coast of NSW visited South Africa in March and was hosted by a local nursery family. He worked with South African propagators as well as visiting gardens and other places of botanic interest. Of course the visit included the Southern Africa IPPS conference.

Nathan has worked for Jamberoo Nurseries for about three and a half years now, and is the main propagator in this medium sized nursery. When I rang he was trying to get three weeks work filling the igloos done in one. He initially read about the exchange program in a recent copy of this newsletter. The nursery owners (Geoff and Kate) enthusiastically supported his application.

He said he was "stoked .. yeah .. rapt" when he heard that his application had been successful. This award has not only been important to him, his family and the nursery, but also the local community. ABC local radio interviewed him when they heard about the success of their local propagator.

Nathan particularly wanted to see how propagation is conducted in South African nurseries. Also he looked forward to experiencing a different culture with local families. Judging from previous exchange awardees experiences he will not be disappointed.

I am sure that we all look forward to hearing about Nathan's experiences at Lilydale this year.

Photo: Provided by Nathan Sparkes for the Propagator

Highlights of the IPPS Young Propagators Group USA Tour Part 2 – The West

After the beauty and hospitality of North Carolina and Tennessee, we, the members of the IPPS young propagators group were off to California. The southern region is justifiably proud of its natural beauty and strong horticultural traditions, and we had heard much about how different the nursery industry was on the west coast. So the sense of expectation for what was to come had us excited! We said goodbye to the spectacular dogwoods of the south, and (after a marathon sprint through what must surely be the world's biggest airport in Atlanta) boarded our plane west.

We piled in to our van in Los Angeles and with our trusty GPS unit 'Jane' calling the shots, headed out of the hustle and grey smog and up highway 101 – the famed 'El Camino Real'.



The nurseries in the south were big, but what we experienced in California would reset our sense of scale altogether. The first place to visit, 'Greenheart Farms', is a huge, modern operation employing up to 300 people. It is divided into 3 main areas – production of vegetable seedlings, production of rose cuttings, and production of Christmas poinsettias. The vegetable seedling production can reach up to 1 billion seedlings per year. This is sown on a computerised seeding



machine that is so efficient it can be run with as little as 2 staff operating it. They have a second seed line to supplement the main line as needed.

The production of roses is aimed at the field grown market and supplies rooted cuttings in as little as 12 – 14 weeks from ordering. It is an intensively managed production system with automated, climate controlled growing areas allowing rapid rooting of cuttings and fast turn around of the crop.



The poinsettia production is equally well managed to ensure the entire crop of plants is ready for despatch within a 4 week period at Christmas time. The monitoring is so well managed that any given house of poinsettias can be 'accelerated' or 'slowed down' to ensure it is at the exact specification at its scheduled time of despatch.

'Duartes' nursery is a huge operation supplying fruit trees, nut trees and grapevines to the massive American market. The heart of the operation is the tissue culture lab which allows for the clonal production of high demand rootstock varieties. Duarte are the only nursery able to supply large numbers of clonal rootstock, as opposed to seedling stock, and this is a major advantage.

There can be up to 500 people working at peak periods. Grapevine grafting, for instance is done in teams of 11 – 13 people. The combined output of these teams is up to 250,000 vines per day. Likewise, potting up plants can be done at a rate of about 250,000 pots per day, with the use of a mechanised potting machine and tractor-trailers.

Our trusty GPS made her first mistake for the tour as we headed from Modesto into Yosemite national park. Close to our destination, and with dusk upon us, we somehow confused the mighty highway 101 with the narrowest, steepest mountain track in the Sierra Nevadas! The fear of rolling down a cliff face in the dark had us all on the edge of our seats. I still don't think poor Lyndy has recovered! But Greg managed to traverse the 'road' safely and we had a brief stop to experience the giant sequoias in Kings Canyon. It was a



highlight of the trip, viewing up close these amazing giant trees. Lots of photos were taken, but none could ever do justice to their sheer size and spectacle – a truly memorable experience, well worth cheating death for!

‘Colorama’ is a large nursery supplying to the retail ornamental trade. They employ up to 250 people in times of peak production. They are spread across 3 sites, but use the main site as the distribution centre for all stock produced. A team of 25 people pack plants during the day to be loaded and shipped at night. This allows for efficient 24 hour turn around of orders.

We got a great insight into the ‘sale on scan’ movement



that has been implemented by the major US retailers. This is where the grower delivers, displays and tends his products on the retailers’ premises, and the retailer pays the grower for each plant as it is sold. This provides the grower with exclusivity, extra margin and more say into the product mix. In practice however, it is not popular with growers, as they are wearing all the cost of maintenance and losses. And without ownership, there is no obligation for the retailer to promote and sell as effectively as they otherwise might.

Much of the nursery is irrigated on custom made flood benches, and has an impressive run-off collection and treatment process. Water is captured in a large on-site dam, filtered, treated with UV and Ozone, and stored in a separate covered dam.

The trip was a brilliant way of seeing the most of a diverse, thriving nursery industry. As well as appreciate the opportunities afforded by the insatiable demands of the worlds largest economy.

Special thanks must go to the tour organisers, Greg, Lyndy and Wayne, as well as my fellow tour and conference participants, for making the trip such a memorable experience.

This project was facilitated by HAL in partnership with the nursery industry. It was funded by voluntary contributions from industry. The Australian Government provides matched funding for all HAL’s R&D activities.

- John Messina

Notes from the ‘Wild West’

A group of 14 IPPS members and interested parties met at Margy Clema’s home and nursery on Monday the 31st of January to discuss the direction of IPPS in the west and the forward planning of the 2010 Conference to be held in WA. At this point in time the greatest interest is in networking and field trips (which frequently go hand in hand) and plans are in place to organise a field trip in the coming cooler months (Perth is currently experiencing its hottest summer on record). A number of IPPS membership packs were distributed to interested parties and will hopefully lead to some new members in WA.

A core group was also formed to help organise the 2010 Conference, and includes Sandy and Val Pate whose good sense and management in such matters will be greatly appreciated. There was considerable enthusiasm to see if the conference might be held in early spring (August) to coincide with Western Australia’s incredible peak wildflower season. Unfortunately it seems that the conference timing (May) is tied to the concurrent IPPS AGM and end of financial year, so delegates to Perth in 2010 will have to content themselves with the merely fantastic array of flowers available in late autumn.

Pam’s minutes of our subsequent teleconference brought a smile to my face as it was reported that I had suggested Fremantle Prison as an option for accommodation. Rather hard beds I replied – in fact, the historic Fremantle Prison offers an evening tour of their scary old facilities accompanied by guards in period dress and Madam Lash in black leather. She deals severely with any misdemeanours by the menfolk. A traditional dinner in the prison corridors culminates a great evening for visitors to WA. As you can see we hope to help organise a memorable IPPS Conference in 2010.

Margy Clema

PROFILE - Jonathan Lidbetter

There are still opportunities in ornamental horticulture for plants selected from the wild. The photo shows some activities Jonathan gets involved in while collecting rare plants. This is what he had to say to my questions.

What are the things that you feel have created or made your standing in the industry?

Coming from a family that loved ‘playing in the dirt’ and growing things stimulated a passion for propagation and sharing what I have learnt along the way. Being prepared to share the failures as well as the successes, hopefully encouraging others not to make the same mistakes.

What do you feel you have to share with others (particularly new members) of the IPPS regarding “the world of propagation”?

A few ideas:

- 1) There are no complete all-encompassing ‘recipes’. Rarely will two propagation set-ups behave exactly the same way and you need to be able to adapt your ‘formula’ to your situation.
- 2) Get a good ‘feel’ for your plant material. There is no replacement for ‘hands-on experience’.
- 3) ‘It can’t be propagated’ usually means we haven’t worked out how to do it yet .
- 4) ‘Bill Bloggs’ may always be better at propagating a particular variety better than you, and he may not even be able to explain why.
- 5) It is important to have an open mind and be willing to experiment when it comes to ideas on how to propagate something.
- 6) The only bad mistake is the one you didn’t learn anything from.

A few skills:

Particularly in the propagation of Australian native plants from seed and cuttings to grafting and tissue culture.

What are the significant things that you have personally gained through IPPS membership?

IPPS provides me with the opportunity to communicate with a wide range of people, all of whom are interested in the art of propagation and understand where I am coming from. The opportunity to learn from people who have been around a lot longer and done a lot more than I have always throws a fresh perspective on a problem.



2007 Japan Conference

In November I had the privilege of traveling to Japan with fellow IPPS member Peter Waugh to attend the Japanese region Conference and present a paper.

Having traveled to South Africa earlier in the year I was expecting a different cultural experience but was not ready for what I was about to see in this very interesting country.

I flew to Auckland to meet Peter and flew to Japan courtesy of his “Frequent Flyer” points and arrived at the new Kansai airport. We were met by IPPS member Uchida San who graciously spent the next three days showing us some very interesting tourist sites in Osaka, Nara and Kyoto. Peter and I saw some awesome Japanese Gardens; in fact we only saw Japanese gardens as there was no other garden style evident. Everywhere we went we saw beautiful displays of trees and plants. There were “Cloud Trees” or as they are locally known “Kaizika” down all the streets and it was interesting to see that they were all propped up with a bamboo scaffolding to prevent them from blowing over in the typhoon season. Many of the nature strips and centre islands down the main roads were all planted with beautifully trimmed Azalea hedges.

The most amazing sight however was all the little potted gardens in front of all the shops and houses. Where ever there was a space a pot had been placed and planted with annuals or vegetables and to my total surprise they were never disturbed.

We then traveled via ferry from Osaka overnight to Miyazaki to attend the IPPS Conference. We were very warmly welcomed by all the IPPS members in attendance, and had an interesting time trying to communicate with each other with members displaying an interesting capacity with the English language.

The Conference was well attended with over 50 members present and a full day was spent on the delivery of papers, all of which were delivered in Japanese, except the papers given by Peter and myself. I guess you could say we were in need of a lot of patience.

The next day was spent touring nurseries in the Miyazaki region. Miyazaki is on the lower side on the bottom island of Kyushu and has a somewhat warmer climate than most of Japan. Many of the plants seen therefore were very familiar, and the nurseries visited were not unlike nurseries you may see in cooler parts of Australia. Production was seen both inside glasshouses and in the open.

We visited a Citrus orchard which was all inside a large heated glasshouse, and every fruit on the trees had been individually wrapped in a protective bag to prevent insect attack and to establish an even skin over the fruit. The humidity in Miyazaki during the summer is very high and it was interesting to note that all outside



BBQ one is at Aya Engei Nursery in Miyazaki and features Prof Yamamoto

growing areas were elevated on mesh panels to allow better air movement around the plants to prevent disease infection.

We were treated to a magnificent Japanese BBQ lunch at Aya Engei Nursery. The staff had gone to a great deal of trouble and labeled all the beer and wine bottles with the IPPS logo. The food and company was fantastic and it was very pleasing to see Dr Yamamoto presiding over the occasion.

After the conference Peter and I were hosted by Naoki Omori who is Japans fruit tree expert. He has written a beautiful book on home garden fruit growing and presented me with an autographed copy. It is of course written in Japanese but the illustrations are magnificent and very self explanatory.

Peter and Naoki celebrate a birthday on 18th November and it was appropriate that the occasion was celebrated in the Japanese way and a very interesting evening was had in a local restaurant and gentleman's club. A trip on the fast train the next day had us back at Kansai airport in time for the return trip to New Zealand where I spent a few days in Peter's company before flying home.



Osaka Castle with Michael Gleeson and Peter Waugh

I would like to thank Peter Waugh for his generous sponsorship of my trip to Japan and for his continuing support of IPPS.

Michael Gleeson

'The GAVEL' OUR SYMBOL OF UNITY

At last year's International Board meeting Peter Waugh presented new gavels to regional directors. I am told that he made them in one of his "Sheds" and had the different timbers selected and sent to him from each region. He also made a hammer bloke to strike the gavel on, and an individual box to store them in. These boxes were also made of the selected timber from the respective region. The following provided by Peter Waugh explains part of this tradition of the society. Expect to hear something like this history at the conference dinner as it is part of the tradition of the society.



In handling the gavel it should remind us that we are a truly international Society that has spread around the globe with one objective in mind – that of Seeking and Sharing our knowledge for the benefit of all.

Each gavel is made from the same pieces of wood, symbolic and of historical importance.

The gavel's knock should remind us that we are an international body bound by one simple, important objective - Seeking and Sharing Knowledge for the Benefit of all.

Hearing the sound we should be reminded of the beauty of the trees from which the woods have been chosen, that we as propagators have an unparalleled vocation raising plants so that they beautify our world to conserve and promote our botanical heritage.

May the durability of these timbers encourage us to pursue our aims with steadfast confidence and integrity!

JAMES WELLS

You will notice the signature of Jim Wells inscribed on the gavel. This is in recognition of Jim's farsighted vision, many years' service and contribution to helping



establish the first IPPS Region and the Society, and in 1951 his election as the inaugural President.

WOODS IN THE GAVEL

The woods of this gavel are placed in the order in which the Regions were established starting at the top face of the gavel.

EASTERN REGION

The founding Eastern Region was established in 1951. The Red Maple (*Acer rubrum*), was selected because it is free-growing and ultimately becomes a large tree with palmate leaves that turn flaming reds and scarlet in autumn. The wood is white to light brown and the species grows throughout the region.

WESTERN REGION

Established in 1960, the Western Region is represented by the Coastal Redwood (*Sequoia sempervirens*), an evergreen conifer reaching a massive 100 metres (300 ft) or more in height and 6 metres (20 ft) plus in diameter. Californian Redwood is claimed to be the world's tallest tree and the diameter is usually measured 3 to 5 metres (10 to 15 ft) above the ground. A wavy grained piece of timber has been selected for the IPPS gavels.

GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND REGION

Established in 1968, GB&I Region is represented by the famous English Oak (*Quercus robur*). Many of the largest trees are believed to date from the Saxon times and were once worshiped.

The species is widely distributed throughout the UK, develops a broad head of rugged branches and grows a very distinctive round-crown shape. The light to dark brown wood is very durable. Oaks will reach 30 metres (100 ft) in height and more than 4 metres (12.5 ft) in diameter and can live over 1,500 years.

NEW ZEALAND REGION

New Zealand, which became a chapter at large in 1972 then a Region in 1984, has chosen to be represented by the Kauri (*Agathis australis*).

This very slow growing conifer occurs naturally only in the northern North Island. The timber is extremely durable, yellow brown, straight grained, knot free and

easily worked. In early settlement days, Kauri was felled for ships spars, houses, furniture and joinery and by the native Maori people to make canoes. Large natural stands of trees are now rare.

AUSTRALIAN REGION

Australia became a chapter at large in 1973 and a Region in 1975. The wood representing this Region is Crow's Ash (*Flindersia schottiana*), a rare species found only in east coast rainforests. Its indigenous name is Cudgerie.

Crow's Ash grows to over 30 metres (100 ft) in height and has spreading foliage. It produces small, white, fragrant flowers and hard, seed pods which are sought-after for floral arrangements.

The honey coloured wood is straight grained, hard, strong and the colour intensifies with age.

SOUTHERN REGION

Established in 1978, the Southern Region has selected the evergreen Southern Magnolia or Bullbay (*Magnolia grandiflora*) which reaches 30 metres (100 ft), often higher and spreads up to 18 metres (58 ft).

The spectacular flowers are 15-23 cm (6 to 10 inches) across, creamy white and very fragrant. No other tree is identified with the South as much as Southern Magnolia. The wood is white to light brown.

JAPAN REGION

Approved as a Region in 1997, wood from the Sakura or Japanese Cherry (*Prunus yedoensis*), the country's national flower and most popular tree has been selected for IPPS gavels.

Sakura is deciduous, grows 15 metres (50 ft) in height and has is 10-12 metre (32 to 36 ft) in diameter. The white blossom has pale red accents. It grows in central and southern Japan around Honshu, Kyushu and Shikoku. The wood is yellow to red-brown, very durable, easily worked and is used widely for furniture and musical instruments. The Ainu tribe decorate their bows and sheaths with its purple-brown bark.

SOUTHERN AFRICAN REGION

The newest Southern African Region was approved in 2006 and has chosen the Kiaat or Bloodwood (*Pterocarpus angolensis*), a deciduous, spreading, slightly flat-crowned species that grows to about 15 metres (50 ft) in height with a dark bark. It has brilliant red sap and the wood is similar to teak.

The Kiaat grows in frost free bushveld and woodland areas of Zimbabwe, northern Botswana, Mozambique and Namibia and other northern parts of Africa where the rainfall exceeds 500 mm per annum.

IPPS MERCHANDISE

Orders for IPPS:

Polo Shirts (Members \$25 and Non-Members \$30) and **Caps** (Members \$12 and Non-Members \$15) can be placed with John Messina of Sunraysia Nurseries. New stock has arrived, Shirt sizes available are:

Small, Medium, Large, XLarge, XXXLarge.

– Contact Details:

John Messina

Sunraysia Nurseries,

P.O. Box 45, Gol Gol NSW 2738

Ph: 02.5024 8502, Fax: 02.5024 8557,

Mobile 0417 389 075

Email: john@sunraysianurseries.com.au

Grafting Techniques – DVD's

Following DVD's are available for sale:

- *Grafting of Roses*
- *Grafting of Rainforest Plants*
- *Grafting Techniques*

\$15.00 each for Members / \$30.00 for Non-Members

Contact Pam Langley for copies.

Challenge

This time I thought that Michael Gleeson needed a rest from challenges, besides I had something that I had wondered if anyone had tried since reading about it.

A paper published last year reported the effect of forms of iron on in vitro callus development of citrus (see http://www.ars.usda.gov/research/publications/publications.htm?seq_no_115=210598). Has anyone researched the effect of iron EDTA chelate or iron sulphate on callus and perhaps root development of cuttings? Maybe this is not really a practical concern as some iron will be present in various propagation media.

This makes me think of the “iron-man” breakfast cereal that is supposed to be high in thiamine (vitamin B1). How many of you use a pre-dip of plant cuttings in a dilute solution of NAA and IBA with thiamine? There are a number of people selling such products who will tell you they are great, while many will also say the research interpretation is flawed and you are wasting your money. Please let me know of your results, or maybe there is a paper in it for a future conference.

Look forward to another challenge next issue. If you have something that you would like to encourage some of our younger members at heart to try then let me know please.

Bruce Higgs

Coming Events

Melbourne Conference: 1-4 May 2008 at the York on Lilydale Resort. Go to the website for details: www.ipps.org.au

NZ Conference (International) May 22-25 2008 West Auckland, NZ at the Langham Hotel.

Joint Eastern and Western Region Conference: 14 - 17 September Denver Colorado

Great Britain and Ireland: 8 -11 October, Falmouth, Cornwall, UK

Southern Region of North America: 19 - 22 October, Charlottesville, Virginia, Omni Hotel

News

The latest Plant Varieties Journal has been published and posted to the IP Australia website at :

http://www.ipaustralia.gov.au/pbr/journal_download.shtml

A CSIRO team at the Tasmanian ICT Centre recently completed a comprehensive upgrade of the Australian Plant Pest Database (APPD), a national online database of pests and diseases of Australia's economically important plants. The database is also important for protecting the natural environment as well as agricultural enterprises.

Read more at:

<http://ausweb.scu.edu.au/aw06/papers/refereed/kearney/paper.html> and

<http://www.csiro.au/news/AustralianPlantPestDatabase.html>



*The Balaustium mite –
Balaustium medicagoense*
-Image CSIRO

Newsletter Editors Comment

Many thanks to all the contributors to the newsletter. Without your support the newsletter would not be what it is. If you have any news items that you would like to share please let me know. I look forward to publishing Q & A session material in future editions.

I was very pleased to hear that yet another South African exchange awardee and new member of the IPPS found out about us through a copy of the newsletter at the workplace. *Please pass one copy of the newsletter around at the workplace or leave it in a public place at work.*

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