Contents:

- Quandongs
- Recipes
- Sources of Food Plants
- Midyim (A Book Review)
- Bauhinias (Lysiphillum)

Plus correspondence, suggestions for further reading and much more.
Editor: Rodney Barker P/O Box 62, Kangaroo Ground, Vic. 3097

Thanks to Merrie and Janine for all their help.

The next newsletter may come out mid-yearish, provided sufficient contributions are forthcoming. Feedback on this newsletter, or any other enquiries, to the editor at the above address.

Membership

Please keep us informed of changes of address. It is pleasing to learn that there have been successful exchanges of plant material, seeds, information etc. between members. This is what the Study Group is for, so feel free to write. Current members are:

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The following S.G.A.P. groups have requested copies of the newsletter:
Canberra Region, Foothills Group, Keilor Plains, Karoondah, Pine Rivers, Rockhampton, and Victoria Region.

Thanks to all the groups that have sent donations, this helps to cover production and postage costs of the newsletter.

Membership is $2.00 for S.G.A.P. members, yearly. Cheque or money order to Carol Newton-Smith 21 Banksia Ave., Beaumaris, Vic., 3193.

World awaits . . .

AS part of our continuing series on scientific breakthroughs, we bring you snippets from an article in "National Farmer" magazine headed: "Tea-tree may hold key to genital herpes cure." The news is that "researchers in Queensland are trying to confirm hopes that a species of tea-tree with medicinal properties holds the cure to the hitherto incurable venereal complaint", among other things. Tea-tree oil is said to be set to blossom as "an alternative farm industry". A project has been established to try to exploit alleged antiseptic, germicidal, and healing properties of oil from a particular species of tea-tree. We eagerly await developments. In the meantime, be careful what you crash through on the way to the beach.
Russell Starr writes that he has tried preparing coffee from *Brachychiton acerifolium*. He roasted and ground the seeds, but as he is not a coffee drinker, won't be trying it again. Russell says it has a fair resemblance to Turkish coffee—black and aromatic. He also cautions that the seeds may contain either malvalic acid or sterculic acid which can cause disorders in eggs of fowl, so it may be unwise to eat large amounts ourselves. (See *Australian Phytochemical Conference*, Proc. 5th 1968). Also he has successfully grown some Burdekin Plums (*Pleiogyne timorense*)—the seeds cannot easily be removed from their hard, woody case, so the "nut" is planted whole. From each nut Russell obtained six or more seedlings from the rotted nut after a few weeks, however they suffer over winter from the cold. Russell is also on the lookout for *Davidsonia pruriens* (coray) as all his died. Apparently there are a couple of plants in the Sydney Botanic Gardens. (!)

There have been quite a few enquiries and comments about the work of Jennie Brand and Vic Cherikoff and the Human Nutrition Unit of Sydney University. I spoke to Vic earlier in the year—he said that they are making complete nutritional analyses of Australian food plants, and are just about to begin a program of study of food plants from P.N.Q. (some of which occur in Australia or have closely related species in Australia). Vic is interested in the cultivation of *Terminalia* spp. (which after analysis has shown high vitamin C content); *Acacia* spp. and yams (particularly their role in carbohydrate metabolism for Aborigines). He also mentioned other academic groups he knew of including Deakin University (Vic.); W.A. Institute of Technology; C.S.I.R.O. particularly on Quandong improvement; Macquarie University (N.S.W.) where there have been recent post-graduate studies on *Persoonia* and *Hicksbeachia* ("slimmer's nut"—good flavour, much lower fat content than...
I don't think we have stressed the dangers of indiscriminate use of wild (and hence variable) plants in the newsletters to date.

From memory, Oates and Seeman ("Victorian Aborigines: Plant Foods") recommend no native plants should be eaten, as the original methods of preparation have been lost.

Certainly *Rhodomyrtus macrocarpa* ("Finger Cherry" of Qld.) has been blamed for causing blindness. *Castanospermum australe* ("Moreton Bay Chestnut") can cause intense griping, per Cribb and Cribb, even with considerable preparation. Even exotic herbs which have been used enthusiastically for centuries (such as Sassafras and Comfrey) are now suspected of causing cancer. The dangers of experimenting with previously untried species, or species which have not been absolutely correctly identified are hence manifold.

My view is that a large number of native plants have been established as safe to eat, and anyone aiming at extending the boundaries of plant use should read, as a first guide, Everist's "Poisonous Plants". The days of "eat, die and learn" have passed some 40,000 years ago.

Instead, feed any plant material that you consider suspect to an annoying neighbour, a vexatious cat or a yappy little dog. Nasty children are always candidates for experimentation as are spouses with large life insurance policies.

Anonymous
QUANDONGS  
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by R. Barker

The Quandong (*Santalum acuminatum*) is a small tree distributed widely in the arid areas of Australia. It requires root associations with other plants in order to survive, and this has led to difficulty with its cultivation. Mature trees are highly ornamental, resist extremes of temperature and tolerate poor quality water (compared to other fruit trees).

The main interest of the Quandong is its bright red fruit, whose flesh and kernel are edible and reportedly attractively flavoured. Medicinal and other uses have been reported. The flesh may be eaten raw, stewed, made into jams, jellies or preserves, or dried without chemicals to be used up to 30 years later. Kernels can also be eaten raw, or roasted and salted.

The C.S.I.R.O. has been studying the Quandong since 1973 and has undertaken breeding, selection and trial plantings in order to improve fruit quality. This article summarises some of the findings of the C.S.I.R.O. and thanks are due to A. Frodsham for his assistance in making information available.

Growing Plants from Seed

*S. acuminatum* seeds are available from SGAP seedbanks and several commercial suppliers. The following method of germination is recommended by the C.S.I.R.O. References quoted at the end of this article detail other methods of germination.

1. Do not remove kernel from seed.

2. Sterilize seed by soaking for 30 minutes in 7% sodium hypochlorite (or "White King" diluted to one-tenth with water). Rinse off bleach with cold boiled water, then dust with fungicide (e.g. Thiram, Zineb...).

3. Plant 2 cm. deep in sterile moist vermiculite (or similar well-drained light potting mix). Don't forget to sterilize pots and your tools.

4. Keep moist but not water-logged at a temperature of 15-20°C for up to 2 years until seed germinates (seeds start germinating from about 3 months).

5. Once seed has germinated, water plants regularly and fertilize fortnightly (with e.g. Aquasol).

6. When seedling is 5-10 cm. high, introduce a host plant into pot, or plant out carefully near a suitable host plant in the garden. Suitable hosts include lucerne, kikuyu, eucalypts, casuarina, acacia and exotic fruit trees.

7. The references include information on grafting, but due to the lack of improved plant material, I won't give details here.
8. Plant out from pots in early Spring to a well drained site. Be careful to avoid root disturbance. Water regularly and protect young plants from predators. Fertilize sparingly with blood and bone and iron chelates.

**Quandong Fruit**

Plants begin to bear at 4 to 5 years.

Fruit ripens in September/October (they are ripe when they fall off the tree, or rattle when shaken). Vitamin C content is higher than oranges. Kernels contain 25% protein, but are rather aromatic, to the extent that some people find them nauseating (this is due to the presence of methyl benzoate, which C.S.I.R.O. will be attempting to reduce in their selected varieties). Kernels also contain methyl salicylate and about 70% oil. Aborigines used the oil as a cosmetic and a liniment, and also to repel flies. Kernels will burn like candle-nuts. Stones have also been used for jewellery and games. Pounded leaves of the quandong were used by aborigines for boils and sores.

**Personal Attempts To Grow Quandong**

Russell Starr reports success with a method similar to that given above for both Quandongs and Macadamias. However, he has tended to lose Quandongs at the transplanting stage.

I have had two goes at growing seed both times without the benefit of the above method. The first time I planted seeds in their shell, but when they hadn't germinated within two months, broke open the shells and planted out the kernels that had not gone mouldy or been broken. Mice then ate them all.

The second time, I used the method given by B. V. Curtis (grow in vermiculite in plastic bags, after removing shells) - all went mouldy.

However, I am confident the above method (if followed scrupulously) will reward the dedicated. Why not try growing this useful and promising plant, and report back to the Study Group on your success (or otherwise).

**References**

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B. V. Curtis - Spare a Spot for the Santalum
Aust Plants 7 : 337-338

W.J.R. Grant & M.S. Buttrose - Santalum Fruit: Domestication of the Quandong Santalum acuminatum
Aust Plants 9 : 316-318

M. Burlass, W.J.R. Grant & K.G.M. Skene - Shoot Regeneration in vitro from Native Australian Fruit Bearing Trees - Quandong & Plum Bush
M. Sedgley - Floral Anatomy & Pollen Tube Growth in the Quandong (Santalum acuminatum (R Br) A.DC)

M. Sedgley - Preliminary Assessment of an Orchard of Quandong Seedling Trees

AFTERTHOUGHT: Those especially keen of experimentation could try grafting Santalum onto non-parasitic relatives, such as members of the closely related families Olacaceae and Opilaceae. Although unlikely, success could result in honour and glory! (within the Study Group).

There are five genera of Santalaceae in Western Australia, all trees or shrubs, and all parasitic upon their hosts' roots; some are leafy, while in others the leaves are reduced to small scales. The flowers are small and white or yellowish-white, in heads, spikes or stalked in panicles. The stamens are equal in number to the perianth-lobes and opposite to them, varying in number from three to six. The fruit is a drupe with a single seed.

Santalum acuminatum (R. Br.) D.C. Quandong

The quandary of quandongs

"If you haven't tried quandongs with goat cream, you haven't lived," said 72-year-old Norm Cornish. Norm, who spends his life inventing devices to make outback life easier, is promoting the quandong, a fruit that grows in the semi-arid regions around Broken Hill, NSW. "Most people can't even spell quandong," said Norm, "so it's an uphill battle to get them eaten." A red fruit that tastes something like rhubarb and grows as big as a cherry, the quandong is still edible after 30 years if dried. Norm also hangs them, when dried, from his hat to keep off flies."
AN OUTSTANDING FOOD SOURCE OF VITAMIN C

Sin.—We have found, in a wild fruit, fifty times as much vitamin C as is present in oranges, and this may be the richest natural source of this vitamin in the world. In our study of the nutritional composition of bushfoods used by Australian Aboriginals, samples are collected by Aboriginal health workers and others and airfreighted to Sydney. In three samples of Termelli ferdinandiana we found ascorbic acid contents of 3150, 2850, and 2300 mg per 100 g edible fruit. The samples came from three different areas near Darwin (Northern Territory) in two successive seasons, 1981 and 1982.

We used reverse phase high performance liquid chromatography on two packed 25 cm Lichrosorb RP-10 m columns connected in series with a 3 cm guard column. The mobile phase is water with pH adjusted to 2-5 with perchloric acid and detection is by a spectrophotometer at 245 nm. Any dehydroascorbic acid is converted to ascorbic acid. We confirmed values for ascorbic acid in T. ferdinandiana fruit by diisoprophenylhydrazine and dichlorophenol methods.

Termelli spp. are tropical trees of the Combretacae family (to which the almond also belongs). T. ferdinandiana, Exell ex S.T. Blake is a tall slender tree growing up to 10 m with large green-to-yellow leaves. It is found along the north-west coast of Australia. The fruit grows along the branches and matures from March to August; it is about 2 cm long and 1 cm in diameter, light green to yellow in colour and contains a single large pip. It looks and tastes like an English gooseberry. Near settlements or camps all the fruit on the trees is eaten, especially by children. It is not a staple food nor one for which a special expedition might be made. One Aboriginal name for the fruit is mammoochan, in the language of people in Western Arnhem Land.

Citrus fruits have around 50 mg vitamin C per 100 g; at 100 mg or above come (uncooked) broccoli, sprouts, kale, cauliflower, parley, nettle, green mango, and kiwi fruit; around 200-300 mg are blackcurrants, guavas, peppers, cashew fruit pulp, some tropical vegetables, and a few bush fruits. At the top of the league table of vitamin C, expressed in mg per 100 g raw food, are sea buckthorn (Hippophae rhamnoides, 450 mg), azida or embilic (Emblica officinalis, 600 mg), rosehips (Rosa canina, 1250 mg), datsock fruit (Diospyros sengelio, 1500 mg), and acerola or Barbados cherry (Malpighia punicifolia, 1000 mg to 2300 mg).

We thank the Australian Institute for Aboriginal Studies for financial support; Ms Robina Lion and colleagues and Mr Clyde Duplo for collecting samples; and Mr G. Huchinson, Mr L. Lawler, Dr Dermot Smyth, and Captain L. J. Hindley for advice.

Jennie C. Brand
Vic Kerckoff
Anna Lee
A. Stewart Trustell

NEW ZEALAND SPINACH

Because it appears to be the first Australian plant used by the discoverers of Australia and because of its value and pleasure today, it seems appropriate to discuss as the first herb in this series Tetragonia tetragonoides or “New Zealand Spinach”.

It is a scrambling or trailing plant which often sprawls over other plants. The leaves are triangular-ovate in shape and both the leaves and the stem are covered with glistening, liquid-filled, small pustules which give it a somewhat clammy feel. The flowers are small and yellow and almost stalkless. They form in the axils of the leaves. Tetragonia tetragonoides is very common along Beach Park at Sandringham. (Vic.)

Propogation from cuttings is easiest but seed is also available.

Cultivation:
Charles Lamp (1979 p.318) classifies it as a weed which indicated that it is not a difficult plant to grow. It is salt resistant and is especially good for a sandy bank. It is a rapidly spreading plant so give it room to grow.

Uses:
Tetragonia tetragonoides has a very natural sodium content (D. Hall 1976 p.74). Sodium has been called the youth natural in your diet will help to keep the degenerative processes of old age at bay. The plant is used in the treatment of stomach cancer in China and Japan (Cribb 1981b p.162).

Try using the herb fresh from the garden in salads and in sandwiches. It is particularly good in egg sandwiches as it removes the need for salt. Like spinach, there is no need for long cooking. It can be lightly steamed and is also a delicious last minute addition to a Chinese stir-fry dish. It is well worth experimenting to find different ways of adding Tetragonia tetragonoides to your diet.

References

CARL NEWTON SMITH (abridged)
NATURE’S DOCTOR • AUG. – SEPT 1982
I have found several Bauhinias which are used as food in many parts of the world. Of the approximate 400 species, at least 10% are local wild foods. Distribution ranges from Brazil, to Yunnan (China), from Southern Africa (with at least four edible species) to India.

I know of three Australian species, one that is at home in Central Australia (but I don't know its name), a rainforest tree *Lysiphillum hookeri* is its current name and I am not going to try it (given the constraints of a Canberra winter), and *Lysiphillum carronii*, a desert tree.

With extreme difficulty I obtained seven seeds from the S.A. State Herbarium, of which I sent two to Jenny Brandt of Sydney University for analysis. They found three alkaloids: rutin, quercitin and quercitrin (all anti-mutagenic) and there are no cyanogenic glucosides. Mr. Vic Cherikoff tasted some of the seed and wrote me that it tastes like raw cashew nuts. Seeds are roughly the size of a lima bean.

The Queensland Herbarium advise that it grows in cracking clay soils and is probably frost resistant. Also, aborigines soaked the flowers in water to provide a sweet drink.


All this fits in with the other Bauhinias which are used as food. However, one other source of information - the office of Dr. Flood, Australian Heritage Commission botanist - states that in North-West Western Australia, it is considered toxic to stock. I found no other references to this effect and it may represent a regional variation.

From my point of view, this is an important possible food crop, and any further information would be most welcome. The horticulture of *L. carronii* is another matter. Where can I get seed for broadcasting? Further analysis is necessary for palatability and edibility, but it would fit into a niche for cultivation, as the Yeheb nut of Somalia (*Coriauxia edulis*) or the Bauhinias of Zimbabwe (*B. thomningii* and *B. petersiana*) all of which are locally considered edible and used as such, and also as ornamentals. It may fit in with other exotics of similar nature (the Honey Locust comes to mind) and other tree legumes (e.g. *Olneya tesota* and *Pithecellobium flexicaule*) but *L. carronii* is in my book a food tree prospect and further trials by others will help to establish its significance.

I would appreciate further comment and contact. Suggestions, opinions and facts are welcome.

**Ed. note** - Bauhinea purpurea has edible flowers, according to the Botany Club of Old Uni. I wonder if anyone has any information as to the edibility of *L. carronii* flowers?
**RECIPES**

**BUNYA NUT FEAST** *(Araucaria bidwillii)*

The following recipes are by Rollo Petrie of the Qld SGAP and were originally published in their Sept 1982 Bulletin. The Pine Rivers SGAP were lucky enough to be able to visit a stand of Bunya pines and enjoyed the prepared nuts. Other prime locations for collecting nuts are the Bunya Mountains (1), the Botanic Gardens in each state (even the Bunyas in Hobart bear fruit occasionally) parkland plantings, and old homesteads. ("Como", an historic homestead in Melbourne, Victoria has quite a few Bunya pines, suitably labelled "beware of falling pine cones" - the trees are easily identified by people standing underneath looking for falling pine cones!!!)

**SPOTTED DOG A LA BUNYA:**

Sultanas or mixed fruit
2 cups minced Bunya nuts (cooked)
2 small teaspoons Baking Powder
1 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons sugar

Method: Mix flour, powdered milk, salt, baking powder and sugar together. Melt butter in a little hot water. Add minced nuts, eggs, butter and fruit to other ingredients. Mix to just pouring consistency, adding a little more water if necessary. Pour into greased large tray or other suitable baking dish. Bake at 450 degrees fahrenheit, reduce to 400 after 20 minutes, bake until cooked.

**BUNYA JOHNnie:**

4 cups minced Bunya nuts (cooked)
2 teaspoons Baking Powder
2 tablespoons powdered milk
½ teaspoon salt
2 eggs
2 tablespoons sugar
1 tablespoon butter
Fruit if required

Method: Mix all dry ingredients together (this includes bunya nuts). Then add eggs and butter which has been melted in a little hot water. Mix to a just-pouring consistency, adding more water if necessary. Pour into greased 7 inch sponge tin. Bake at 450 degrees fahrenheit for 20 minutes, reduce heat to 400 degrees and bake until cooked.

**BUNYA FRUIT CAKE** *(Moist cake-come-brownie):*

3 cups S.R. flour
3 cups minced Bunya Nuts (cooked)
2 teaspoons Baking Powder
1 teaspoon salt
4 tablespoons powdered milk
1 heaped cup raw sugar
2 heaped cups butter or margarine
5 eggs
Fruit to taste

Method: Mix all dry ingredients together, add rest with a little water to make mixture to a just-pour consistency. Pour into a greased large lamington tin or other suitable tin. Bake at 450 degrees for 20 minutes, then reduce to 400 degrees and continue baking until cooked.

*Araucaria bidwillii* *(Bunya Pine)*

A tall pine tree 40m in height eventually. The cones may weigh 10kg or more and are produced high in the trees' crowns. The leaves are stiff and spiky. Each tribe had its own particular set of trees that it owned. They were about the only hereditary aboriginal item. There were large harvests of seed every three years and aborigines would travel great distances to these trees in the Bunya Mountains. The very large seeds were eaten raw when unripe, or roasted and eaten when ripe. Also, the seeds were pounded into a meal and baked in ashes as a cake. Sometimes, the large Bunya nut was hidden in a waterhole for a month or two where it would germinate or go mouldy (it became very offensive to the white palate). This was considered tasty. This was a time of the year when the tribes were fattened up considerably from eating large quantities of bunya nuts.

*Illustrations & description of Bunya pine from "Mutoorri" by Glen Leiper.*
We still need a member to volunteer to manage a seedbank, plus input from all members on how a seedbank should operate (free, by donation, or semi-commercial lines?).

In lieu of a fully operational seedbank, it will be necessary to approach other suppliers to obtain Australian Food Plants.

The cheapest method is seed, and SGAP members can get free seed from their State seedbanks. The Victorian seedbank includes over a dozen food plants (Allognyne haepllii, Billardiera cymosa, Brachychiton acerifolium and populeum, Eustrephus Latifolius, Grevillea robusta, Hibiscus spp, Passiflora cinnabarina etc. I haven't checked to see if these are all still in stock.) I haven't seen lists for other States. Also local SGAP groups often have their own seedbanks.

A good commercial supplier is Nindethana Seed Service (R.M.B.939 Woogenilup 6324 (W.A.) (098)54-1066) with about two dozen food plants (Cissus antarctica and hypoglaucu, Euchylaena tomentosa, Grevillea leucopester, Linospadix monostachyyus, Macadamia tetraphylla, Myoporum insulare and montanum, Passiflora herbertiana, Persoonia spp, Podocarpus elatus, Santalum acuminatum, Xyloem menum pyriforme etc.)

Other suppliers include Harpers, West Australian Native Plants, Flamingo Seeds, Diggers Seeds, Phoenix, New Gippsland Seed Farm (New Zealand Spinach); sorry, I haven't got addresses (try "Your Garden" magazine, or perhaps they would care to lodge classified advertisements in the next newsletter?)

Nurseries also sell Australian Food Plants, tho' usually as ornamentals. "Australiflora" in Montrose (Victoria) sells a good range of rainforest plants with food potential (Davidsonia pruriens, Aleurites moluccana, Austromyrtus spp, etc.) One of our members (Heather Meeks) was developing an arboretum/nursery specializing in native food plants, but I'm not sure of current details. Also see "Australian Plants" for specialist nurseries.

Anyone knowing sources of seed, spare seeds or who has tried germinating seed is invited to drop a line for ultimate use by the seedbank.

***UPDATE***

I have recently obtained copies of old SGAP Qld Region and NSW newsletters from Carol.

SGAP Qld 1984 list includes quite a number of food plants (Aleurites moluccana, Austromyrtus dulcis, Brachychiton spp, Lysiphillum carroni & hookeri, Sterculia quadridida, Syzygium spp, Xyloem menum pyriforme, etc...). Enquiries to E. Arthur (See Curator) 39 Addison St., Woodridge, 4114.

NSW does not publish its full seed list, but will provide the list and propagation notes on request - please send SAE to SGAP c/- 17 New Zealand St., Parramatta, 2150.
"MIDYIM" — From a book by KATHLEEN MCArTHUR.

Number One in an occasional series of Book Reviews.

I have just borrowed from the library "The Bush In Bloom" by Kathleen McArthur (Kangaroo Press Kenthurst 1962), a wildflower painter and natural history enthusiast. Although not packed with "hard" facts, it has quite a few items on Australian Food Plants and manages to combine the authors encyclopedic knowledge of botanical literature with superb illustration. Her chatty personal style is entertaining and highly readable.

I have copied part of one chapter from the book as an example of her approach. Note that Austromyrtus dulcis is widely available from plant nurseries due to its attractive foliage. It also germinates very readily from fresh seed.

Midyim

In March/April 1836, two Quaker missionaries visited the Moreton Bay Penal Settlement. One of them, James Backhouse later published the diary of his visit to the Australian colonies which is well studded with his botanical findings, including those at Moreton Bay.

When unfavourable winds delayed their departure from the pilot station on Moreton Island, Backhouse went botanizing through the great sand-mass that is this island and among the plants he listed was the Midyim of the Aborigines. At that time it was classified as Myrtus tenaxfolia; it is now Austromyrtus dulcis and at long last is gaining popularity as a garden plant, with its pink new leaf growth, white and sometimes pink myrtle flowers and fruit of distinctive flavour. I have no evidence of it being eaten by birds but expect it would be, although I do know that it is eaten by dingoes, having seen their turds on Fraser Island quite laden with the little seeds. Its flowers in early summer and as Backhouse found, the fruits are ripe in autumn.

In returning from the west side of the Island, my attention was diverted by a multitude of butterflies, and by a large lizard; and after walking for some time, I again and again found myself on the west coast. Taking therefore my compass, I determined to make my way direct to my companions, whom I succeeded in reaching, after some fatigue, by wading through a lagoon, and crossing some steep sand-hills. The latter were overgrown by Myrtus tenaxfolia, a myrtle, of low stature, with narrow leaves, and sweet, aromatic, white berries, spotted with purple. These are the most agreeable, native fruit, I have tasted in Australia; they are produced so abundantly, as to afford an important article of food, to the Aborigines.

With the growing movement towards cultivating our native fruits, Midyim is one to take seriously.

My home is called Midyim, the name having been given to me in the forties by an Aboriginal friend and fortunately I spell it in the same way as did Manson Bailey in the previous century. Probably because of this association Arthur Harold of Noosa once presented me with a small jar of Midyim jelly which he had made after much laborious berry picking. It would go well with certain meats.

Postscript: Some months having passed since writing the above, as I was wandering vaguely through early issues of the Wildlife Preservation Society's magazine Wildlife in Australia I came across Dorothy Makin's article 'August Day at Sandy Cape' in the second issue of September 1963, which confirmed my statement on Midyim as dingo food and also listed the birds that the Makins had observed feeding on the berries.

Besides the road a patch of Midyim... still carried a few fruits. Where the bushes had been cut back from the road, new shoots had sprung up, very pretty with their red colouring. At about Christmas time the shrubs offer scented white flowers rather reminiscent of garden May.

But we discovered a rather odd thing about this plant. The greynish or faintly purplish spotted fruits, as well as being attractive to birds, are relished by dogs. Digby and Binks, the light station dogs, seek out the fruits, and from the many small seeds in dingo droppings we believe the wild dogs eat them too. The behaviour of the domestic dogs when excitedly tracking and sniffing through the Midyim clumps would seem to indicate the frequent visits of dingoes to the bushes, especially as we have seen their fresh tracks.

Birds known to feed on the Midyim berries include Lewin Honeyeaters, Olive-backed Orioles, Mistletoe Birds and the Crow.

REPRODUCED HALF SIZE.
SEE ALSO RECIPE ELSEWHERE IN THIS NEWSLETTER.
FURTHER READING

These supplement the reading lists in Newsletters 1 and 2.

- E. V. Lassak and T. McCarthy: Australian Medicinal Plants Methuen (Aust) 1983
- Glen Leiper: Mutooroo-Plant use by Australian Aboriginal People Assembly Press (Qld) 1983
- D. M. Churchill, T. B. Muir and D. M. Sirkora: The Published Works of Ferdinand J. H. Mueller (1825-1896) Muelleria 4: 1 - 120 and 5 (4): 229-248 (refer especially to subject headings such as "Economic Plants", "Medicinal Plants" etc.)
- Ed. Janice Reed: Body, Land and Spirit Uni Qld Press (St Lucia) 1982 (see esp. "10 Fish For 1 Man" by Betty Meehan)
- Dulcie Levitt: Plants and People - Aboriginal Uses of Plants on Groote Eylandt Australian Institute of Aboriginal Studies (Canberra) 1981

Interesting articles can be found in the following periodicals:
- S.G.A.P. Victorian Newsletter Alice Talbot - Herbs and Other Useful Plants (Sept. '82 and Dec. '82).
- Ross McDonald - Native Plants As Others See Them (Dec. '83) (BUT read J.H. Willis (Mar. '84) and Jim McAllester (June '84) for alternative views).
- Permaculture Quarterly 12 pp. 17, 29 and 36 13 many articles 16 pp. 5 - 23
- Australian Plants 12 : (June '83) 132 (on Grevillea leucoptera)

Although not very informative on Australian food plants, the following is essential for identifying plants in the wild (South-Eastern states only): Jean Galbraith A Field Guide To The Wildflowers of South-East Australia Collins (London) 1977.

Any suggestions for further reading are more than welcome; also book reviews and articles compiled by members will be considered for publication in subsequent newsletters as space allows. You don't need to be a professional writer or horticulturist - your own experience of growing or using Australian plants is of interest to other members. Also of value are "literature searches" - collating and summarizing information on particular plants from a variety of sources; see items in this newsletter on Bauhinias and Quandongs.

Remember, it's your Study Group, and we rely on members' experience and interest to maintain a positive information exchange!
The following are due for release now or in the near future. Reviews are solicited for the next newsletter.

- The Food Potential of Seeds from Australian Native Plants
  Deakin University Press (Geelong) 1985  (about $15.00)

- Jennifer Isaacs : Bush Tucker
  I heard her discuss her plans for this book on the radio—it recounts her experience of living with tribal Aborigines and learning traditional methods of food collection and preparation. (The published title may have altered).

- Ed. D. Noel : Proceedings of the West Australian Conference on Tree and Nut Crops, University of Western Australia, April 1983
  Byron Lamont kindly sent me a copy of the paper he presented at this conference, detailing his investigations into the food value of a number of Proteaceae. (Including palatability, yield and preparation).

If undeliverable, please return to:
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P.O. BOX 62
KANGAROO GROUND
VIC. 3097