

REVEGETATION

WATTLE | PLANT?

AS nitrogen-fixers, wattles should be a vital part of all revegetation plans. If you want more than boring old *Acacia saligna*, plan NOW to collect seed for next year's planting.

There are many wonderful wattles to use, choose as many as you can that grow in the appropriate soil type. It does not really matter if you don't know the names, but if you would like to learn them, the key in the newest 'Blackall and Greive' (Part II, 1998) should help. Contact your local Community Herbarium if you don't have your own copy.

There is also a new computer package called "Wattle", which is currently being developed by Bruce Maslin. This system provides both an electronic means of quickly and easily naming your specimens and for selecting appropriate species for growing, based on user-defined environmental, biological or utilisation criteria. A comprehensive package of information will be provided for each species, including pictures and its role in revegetation. A prototype of the "Wattle" system was recently published on CD for plants in the Kalannie-Goodlands LCDC; you can use this to give you some ideas for your project.

The first phase of the main "Wattle" project will be published on CD during 2000; in the meantime a working copy of the program is available at the Reference Herbarium in Perth.

As you drive around your district, make a note of wattles that are flowering exceptionally well. Keep a note of these sites where you won't forget them, on the fridge, say. Plan to collect the seed between the end of October and the beginning of December. Wattle seed ripens very quickly and pops off in all directions, so you need to keep an eye out and be ready to collect at any point during this time. Rope in all your friends – the more seed the merrier!


Remember to get a licence from CALM if collecting from Crown land (your LFW Officer can help with advice) and permission from the owner of the land on which the plants are growing.

Start collecting large paper bags – booze bags are good. I like to use long-handled linen shopping bags which hook over the shoulder, and have a wide mouth for sweeping seeds into. Keep these in the car, along with an old tarpaulin or opened-out chaff bag. As soon as you note some wattle pods turning brown, start collecting. Spread out the tarpaulin on the ground below the bush and sweep the seed off into your container or onto the tarpaulin.

Dry in a warm, windless place. Make sure the pods are covered, or as they pop you'll lose half of your collection.

Provide some seeds to your nursery operator for growing on, and keep the rest for direct seeding.

Penny Hussey

Plan your  collecting NOW!

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WATTLE | PLANT? LARGE SHRUBS

A. celastrifolia
Wandoo country, gravel

A. ancistrophylla
N, C & E Wheatbelt,
woodlands

A. jibberdingensis
N & E Wheatbelt, granites

A. trigonophylla
C Wheatbelt, granites

A. rassei
E Wheatbelt, sand

A. denticulosa
C Wheatbelt, granites

Drawings by Marion Simmons from "Acacias of Australia, Vol II"