

Website: www.hwoodturners.org

TUTOR: Clive Wilson 027 491 3868
cdwilson@xtra.co.nz

Issue No **26** Friday 29th July 2022



**Hamilton
Woodturners
Club**



OPEN WORKSHOP

Saturday morning

(tomorrow- 30th July)

9.00am - 12 noon.

Duty Officer: **STEPHEN HAWLEY**



BILL's Tassie blackwood platter shows off its amazing grain lines and colours.

Tutor's comment

Last week was the final in the series of super-expensive and hard-to-find timbers. However, to avoid confusion with timbers having similar names e.g. African **Blackwood** and Tasmanian **Blackwood** I have added some notes about the Tassie variety.

Tasmanian Blackwood does not fit into the category of super-expensive, hard-to-find timbers. It is quite a common tree found throughout Australia's eastern coast line and also found growing prolifically in New Zealand. Believe it or not the Tassie variety was introduced into NZ **for firewood** purposes!!!! What a waste of beautiful turning wood.

African Blackwood belongs to the **DALBERGIA** family while Tasmanian Blackwood belongs to the **ACACIA** family.

We have had many beautiful turning projects using the Tassie wood. We still have good supplies of the Tassie stuff waiting to be transformed into woodie treasures.

To my knowledge no club member yet has undertaken a project using the African blackwood. The wood has to be imported and likely to do serious damage to your wallet.

It is reported to be just about the best wood ever for threading.

Further on in this TT you will find useful notes about Tasmanian Blackwood.

Q: Why didn't the **chicken** cross the road?

A: Because there was a **KFC** on the other side.

Australian..... or Tasmanian blackwood

Acacia melanoxylon, commonly known as the **Australian or Tasmanian blackwood**, is an [Acacia species](#) native in South eastern [Australia](#). The species is also known as **Blackwood, hickory, mudgerabah, Tasmanian blackwood**, or **blackwood acacia**. The tree belongs to the *Plurinerves* section of *Acacia* and is one of the most wide-ranging tree species in eastern Australia.

The tree is able to grow to a height of around 20 m (66 ft) and has a [bole](#) that is approximately 150 cm in diameter. It has deeply fissured, dark-grey to black coloured bark that appears quite scaly on older trees.

Distribution

In its native range the tree is found down the east coast of [Australia](#) from [Queensland](#) in the north, down the east coast into [New South Wales](#), through [Victoria](#) and west along the south coast of [South Australia](#). It is also found down the east coast of [Tasmania](#). It has become naturalised in [Western Australia](#). In New South Wales it is widespread from coastal area and into the [Great Dividing Range](#) but is not found further inland.

Timber

Acacia melanoxylon (**Tasmanian blackwood**) is valued for its decorative timber which may be used in cabinets, musical instruments and in boatbuilding.

Appearance

Sapwood may range in colour from straw to grey-white with clear demarcation from the heartwood. The heartwood is golden to dark brown with chocolate growth rings. The timber is generally straight grained but may be wavy or interlocked. The wood is lustrous and possesses a fine to medium texture.

The name of the wood may refer to dark stains on the hands of woodworkers, caused by the high levels of [tannin](#) in the timber.

Properties

Acacia melanoxylon timber has a density of approximately 660 kg/m³ and is strong in compression, resistant to impact and is moderately stiff. It is moderately blunting to work with tools and bends well. It may be nailed or screwed with ease, but gluing may produce variable results. The wood is easily stained and produces a high-quality finish.

Australian blackwood seasons easily with some possible cupping when boards are inadequately restrained. The timber produces little movement once seasoned.

The timber may be attacked by furniture beetles, termites and powder-post beetles (sapwood). It is resistant to effective preservative treatments.

It has been introduced to many countries for forestry plantings and as an ornamental tree. It now is present in Africa, Asia, Europe, Indian Ocean, the Pacific Ocean, South America and the United States. It is a declared [noxious weed](#) species in South Africa and is a pest in Portugal's [Azores](#) Islands. It was also recently listed by the [California Invasive Plant Council](#) (Cal-IPC) as an invasive weed that may cause limited impact (Knapp 2003). Its use as a street tree is being phased out in some locales because of the damage it often causes to pavements and underground plumbing. In some regions of Tasmania, blackwood is now considered a pest.

Uses

[Indigenous Australians](#) derive an [analgesic](#) from the tree. It was also used to make [spear-throwers](#) and shields.

The wood has many uses including wood panels, furniture, fine cabinetry, tools, boats, inlaid boxes and wooden kegs. It is approximately the same quality as walnut, and is well-suited for shaping with steam. The bark has a [tannin](#) content of about 20%. It may also be used for producing decorative veneers.

The tree's twigs and bark are used to poison fish as a way of fishing. This tree can also be used as a fire barrier plant, amongst other plants, in rural situations.

Plain and figured Australian blackwood is used in musical instrument making (in particular guitars, drums, Hawaiian ukuleles, violin bows and organ pipes), and in recent years has become increasingly valued as a substitute for [koa](#) wood.



Tasmanian Blackwood



Tasmanian blackwood (*Acacia Melanoxylon*) has many uses. Being an excellent tonewood it is used for making beautiful musical instruments.

The multi-coloured grain swirls and irregular lines are featured in fine furniture.

Picture far left shows the scaly bark in older trees.



Our JOHN has been busy again whipping up a matai and rimu woods lidded pot.

OK which wood formed the lid? Rimu or Matai.



A "Goodonya" gong for **STEPHEN O'Connor** the creator of this special woodie treasure. Two colour-contrasting woods with some clever precision fitted parts were used in the making.



Our **MURRAY** has excelled with this turning project. BRILLIANT idea with a stunning outcome. It's brand new but Murray has given this hollow form a centuries-old look. Patient Dremel tool-work on the top section and the blue-stained base contributes to the overall eye-catching appearance.



(Picture right)

GRAEME used a long slab of highly coloured plum wood for his one-piece turning project



Another **GRAEME** masterpiece.

Abstract art in swamp kauri wood sourced from the Lake Whangape district.

(Pictures below)

Two happy Thursday session blokes.
Who are they?

