

ANPSA BRACHYCHITON & ALLIED GENERA STUDY GROUP

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**Financial matters** : Subs run from June to June, & remain at \$ 5 within Australia, & \$ 10 overseas. A tick in the relevant spot below shows where you are financial up to, according to my records.

2006-07	2007-08	2008-09	2009-2010	2010-2011
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**New names for hybrids** : I have re-named a few hybrids as resellers wanted names with more 'zing' to them. All of these are pure *bidwillii*, or so I think. What Merv & I used to call Large Red or 'Big Red' or 'Red Beau Belle' is now 'Red Baron' (Snoopy may follow later). 'Small Red' is now 'Pinocchio', & a new pink seedling at Merv's that flowered well as a 2-yr-old, with quite large flowers, & is still under a metre tall, Merv has christened 'Little Ripper'. We hope it will stay small & serve as a flowering pot plant, a very large market in Europe & N. America. Merv had another seedling with dark red relatively non-fading flowers (shall compare it to *garrowayae* this coming spring) a little larger on average than Beau Belle. It is 3 m tall as a 3-yr-old, produced dense sprays of flowers last summer, & has much-lobed leaves like the typical S-E Qld form of *bidwillii*.

We have called it 'Dark Knight', & have crossed it to the dark red clone of Robin Hood, namely 'Will Scarlet'. And also to some other things. It is pure dark red inside the flower, unusually for a *bidwillii*. Another of Merv's new seedlings has slightly larger flowers than Beau Belle, of a bright orangy-pink shade, & leaves similar to Beau Belle & Jasper Belle. The orangy shade could be from Jasper Belle, via a bee. I have called it 'Newbie'. Yet another seedling flowered as a 1-yr-old, with numerous clusters of pink flowers on its trunk & stems as well as on twigs. I have called it 'Cormy', from this cormiflorous flowering habit. Most of the flowers are fairly small, but some are Beau Belle size (4.5 cm). It will be 3 yrs old this coming spring, & is now 3 m tall, & I expect the average flower size will increase considerably as its root: flower ratio rises, if it does. A bright orangy-pink seedling of mine, now 6 yrs old, originally did not greatly impress me, although I named it 'Gail's Star'. It has Beau Belle sized flowers, with more pointy petals, but is proving very floriferous, with a 3-month flowering period. Brent (see later) calls it 'Blondie'.

A re-named non-*bidwillii* clone is *acerifolius* 'Ian', a very large-leaved form with long inflorescences, & the pollen parent of the Robin Hoods. The female parent is Red Baron. Ian becomes 'Waldron Giant', as this clone came from the late Ian Waldron, once Qld secretary of SGAP. The new name is down to Brent.

**New hybrids created** : Approaching flowering size here are *B. bidwillii* (Beau Belle) x *B. muellerianus* (an apricot-pink clone) seedlings. Trevor Garrad, a semi-retired

nurseryman cum farmer, breeder of the widely used *Syzygium* Tiny Trev, & brachy fancier, gave me a flowered plant of the same cross (but done using different clonal parents), which is a pale apricot-pink. He also gave me cutting material of 2 different clones of a cross between his equivalent of Robin Hood (*acerifolius* x *bidwillii*), but using parents not as good as Merv used (but they gave a good result), x 'Jerilderie Red', an x-*roseus* (*acerifolius* x *populneus*) hybrid about 100 years old. Maybe even a little more. I have yet to get a pod set on a *roseus* tree, unlike virtually all my other mature brachys except maybe Griffith Pink. These two 3-way hybrids should be big enough to flower in the spring, hopefully. Trevor sent me digital images of the first flowering of the better of the two, at his place, & it is most impressive. Lots of clusters of red bells on a plant about a metre tall by 1 & a quarter m wide. The 2 plants he gave me are both growing wider than they are tall, like their parent.

Small seedlings include *albidus*, *chillagoensis*, *bidwillii* Beau Belle x *garrowayae*, *bidwillii* Red Baron (= K10) x *garrowayae*, Robin Hood (*acerifolius* x *bidwillii*) x *bidwillii*, Robin Hood x *muellerianus*, Robin Hood x *discolor* [has reddish bark & red-veined leaves close in shape to juvenile *discolor*], Robin Hood x *garrowayae*, Robin Hood x x-excellens (*discolor* x *bidwillii*) 'Rosalind', Rosalind x *garrowayae*, Rosalind x *spectabilis*, Newbie x Rosalind, Newbie x Clarabelle, Newbie x *garrowayae*, F2 Robin Hood x *garrowayae*, F2 Robin Hood x Rosalind, F2 Robin Hood x Clarabelle, & various line-breedings within *bidwillii*, which may be the most variable of all brachys. Older seedlings include *bidwillii* Beau Belle x *vitifolius*. Seedlings from this summer's pods include various Robin Hood clones x *garrowayae*, & Jasper Lode x *garrowayae* & *garrowayae* x Red Baron. Seeds not yet sown include Cormy x itself & other *bidwillii*s, & Newbie x Rosalind & Clarabelle & *garrowayae*.

**Another hybrid named :** I have mentioned in a couple of earlier newsletters a hybrid raised by a friend of mine that is almost certainly Qld bottle tree x flame tree (*rupestris* x *acerifolius*). The female parent was *rupestris*, & as a seedling it looked almost pure flame tree. Adult leaves are mostly unlobed & look similar to an unlobed *populneus*. As it switched to producing some adult leaves, it produced some 'adult' branches at random over the tree, interspersed with juvenile ones, & with all leaves on a given branch all either the one form or the other. Usually the transition is gradual, with leaves altering along a branchlet. It flowered on the adult branches, giving short upright spikes of smallish tangerine-coloured flowers, & I have called it 'Tangerine Belle'. It is now a very dense 6 m tree, close to a rounded pyramid in shape, quite unlike a young *rupestris*, & a good deal denser than even well-watered flame trees. It is not a spectacular blossom tree, but an interesting foliage one, with 2 'iconic' parents. It grafts easily on to flame tree. This paragraph up to here I had in my last newsletter. My friend Brent Vieritz recently gave me some newly germinated seedlings of what may be the same cross. He collected a large number of *rupestris* seeds, sowed them, & noted a minority of non-bottle tree looking seedlings appear. True *rupestris* seedlings have very thin simple leaves at first, while these had glossy leaves which while still simple were 3 or 4 times wider than *rupestris* leaves. My seedlings now have 4 or so leaves each, of the same shape. I first saw the original Tangerine Belle when it was around a metre tall, & all its leaves were then virtually identical to a juvenile flame tree, with a broad glossy 5-lobed shape. Adult flame trees are usually 3-lobed, though some trees have simple leaves or some 2-lobed

leaves. Brent said the only other brachy anywhere in the vicinity of the bottle trees was a flame tree. So I shall wait with interest to see what happens as these seedlings mature. NOTE, a week later. A fifth leaf has now appeared on 2 seedlings, & they have 2 & 5 lobes respectively.

**F2 seedlings of 'Robin Hood' :** I have 60 or so of these, all now 3.5 yrs old. Only one flowered last summer, & it was one that had leaves close to its *bidwillii* parent, unlike most of the others. The flowers were 6 cm wide, dark pink, Beau Belle shape, & it flowered well for 3 months. I crossed it to *garrowayae*, Rosalind, Clarabelle & Dark Knight. It seems as keen to grow sideways as up, & is currently 1.5 m tall.

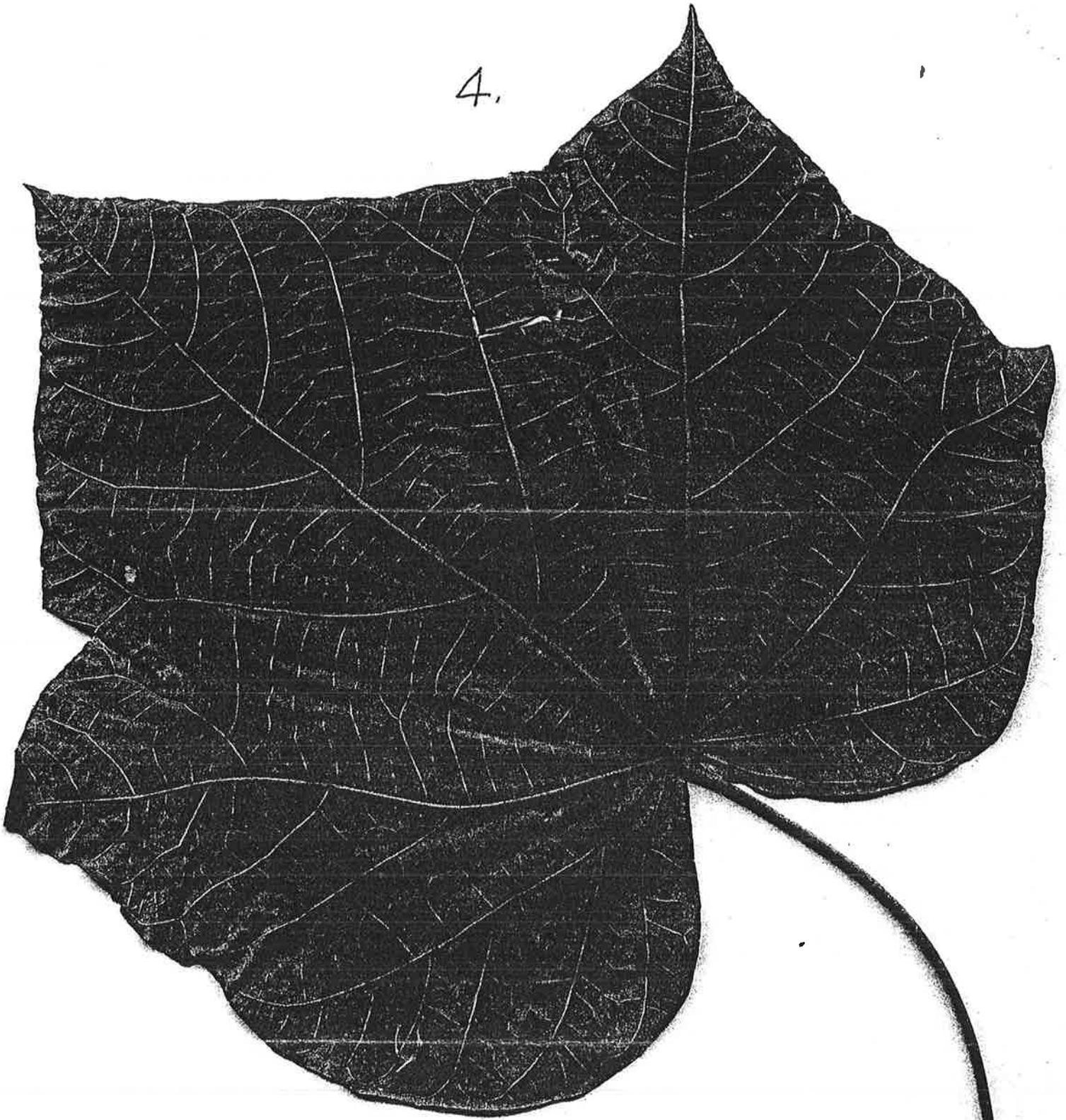
Seedlings of Garrad's similar cross are too small to show much as yet, but all had visible cotyledons, unlike *bidwillii*'s section of the genus. The visible cotyledon trait is dominant.

**Brachychiton seeds as coffee :** Most *bidwillii* strains have pods almost lacking the siliceous irritant hairs around the seeds, which deter one from collecting large numbers of seeds to grind into 'coffee' or flour. Red Baron, Beau Belle, Pinocchio, Newbie & others produce lots of pods when bees are prevalent, & have good seeds & easily-hand opened pods. *B. acerifolius* & its hybrids have dark shiny pods which are quite hard to open, & moderately itchy seed silica needles around the seeds. *B. viscidulus* in particular has seeds surrounded by oxalate crystals which are very hard on bare hands if you are trying to clean a batch of seed. Some of its close neighbours are a bit the same way. I have not tried shelling them all, as I grow most from grafts.

**Brachys to Victoria :** I recently delivered some of my newer grafted crosses to customers & study group members in southern NSW & Northern Victoria, plus a couple to Attila Kapitany in Melbourne. These last two were taken to Melbourne for me by new member Grant Allen, who is groundsman at the Mulwala-Yarrowonga golf club, a well-appointed 45-hole course which will soon be blossoming with many brachy hybrids, plus grafted juveniles of *B. sp. Ormeau*, which may be Queensland's rarest tree. It is quite frost-hardy, & certainly a gorgeous foliage tree. It should feature in Attila's next succulents book, as it is in the bottletree group like *rupestris* & *compactus*.

**Leaf image on next page :** This is a photocopy of a medium-sized leaf of *B. velutinosus*. The larger leaves would not fit on an A4 page. The upper surface is dark green, & the lower surface is silvery, & the leaf veins etc. show up better, so this is the side I copied. It is darker than in real life. Several grafts from the same tree have recently taken. It has quite large red flowers, & was c 8 m tall, erect & moderately bushy.

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*B. VELUTINOSUS.*