

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants

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Goodeniaceae Study Group Newsletter No. 7

May-June/1991

Leader:

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Hello everyone,

The newsletter has been in recess for a few months now while I and my plants tried to cope with a severe lack of water and growth. As I have mentioned in earlier newsletters I do not like to artificially water my garden plants so it is interesting after such a dramatic change in climatic conditions to look back on species survival over such a period (see the notes later in the newsletter). The bulk of the newsletter will be taken up with members correspondence again as I have a couple of long letters on hand which contain interesting information and observations.

I have had further correspondence with Greg Howell about *Scaevola* spp and Greg has offered to join the Group and write some articles for the newsletter. It will be very useful to have professional botanical expertise within the Group as it is something we have been neglecting (at least I have - I don't like showing my ignorance!) and I do feel it is now time for the Group to be concentrating on specimens of known provenance. Relying on plants obtained from nurseries and gardens is fraught with problems as cross-fertilization is always a danger, creating unnatural hybrids and making the task of identification even more difficult than it should be. Greg has again offered us material for propagation and distribution however the difficulty is always how to handle this material and who should grow it on for the Group. Is any member interested in undertaking this task as his/her contribution to the Group? It has fallen to me in the past, however I am getting the distinct feeling that it is a fulltime project and will rapidly erode my capacity to get involved in the actual growing and collecting of species. One could argue that this is not necessarily a bad thing however I also have the nasty habit of being a little lazy when it comes to actually distributing material which tends to defeat the purpose of the exercise. A Victorian member would have the advantage of more direct contact with Greg (that's a hint!).

Talking of distribution of propagating material, I haven't really forgotten that some members have outstanding requests unfulfilled. The lack of rain and the seemingly never-ending high temperatures have not been conducive either to obtaining good supplies of material or to sending it through the post. The situation has improved a little over the past few weeks so that I feel I can now start dispatching again. I would probably dispatch on a Friday for

delivery on the following monday. I think a phone call from those desirous of material is the best way of organizing it. It wouldn't need to be a long call. Just an indication of any particular species you would like and when you would be available to receive it. My phone number is (02) 481-9406. Probably thursday evening is the best chance of catching me at the moment as I am involved in a Technical College course at present.

I have made modifications to my watering system so the my plastic igloos also now receive regular watering if I am absent for extended periods. Now all I have to worry about is the excess water bill.

Firstly a financial report. Currently we are relatively solvent with \$ 138.83 in the bank and few major expenses looming.

Balance at 30/6/90	\$ 200.19
Subscriptions and donations	133.00
Interest	5.85
Total income	138.85
Newsletters	53.46
Watering system	91.46
Excess water	41.82
Postage	16.42
FID	0.05
Total expenditure	203.21
Balance at 30/6/91	\$ 135.83

I gave a talk to the Central Coast group of the NSW SGAP and to the Canberra Region in February and have invitations to talk to The Blue Mountains Group and to the NSW Region meeting in November. The latter will be a combined meeting with the leader of the Palm study groups and is part of a policy by the NSW Region to promote study groups more widely within the Society.

Membership

As I mentioned in the last newsletter monies for next year will fall due in July. The membership fee for this year will be \$5 and I hope you can perceive value in that. A major expense this year will be in potting mix as there are an increasing number of plants in need of re-potting and establishment as specimen plants.

Active members in the group are

Canberra

Geoff Clarke, 26 Henry St, Cook, ACT, 2614

New South Wales

Jonathan Lidbetter, 29 George St, Pennant Hills, 2120

Philip Strong, 6 Jetty Ave, Charmhaven, 2263

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Klaus Querengasser, P.O. Box 73, St Lucia, 4067

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Leon Steinhardt, Lot 56, Leurette Rd, M/S 231, Laidley, 4341

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Ida Jackson, 7 Centenary Ave, Kingscote, Kangaroo Is, 5223

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Victoria

Peter Aldridge, 66 Ogilvie St, Essendon, 3040

Joan Carr, 2 South Maddingley Rd, Bacchus Marsh, 3340

Joan Hales, McDonalds Rd, Glen Alvie, 3979

Rita Luff, 95 Seebeck Rd, Rowville, 3178

Dr M. McDowall, 10 Russell St, Bulleen, 3105

Bruce Schroder, 17 Jubilee Rd, Montrose, 3765

Barbara Tillotson, 16 Potter St, Black Rock, 3193

Western Australia

Hazel Dempster, GPO Box W2040, Perth 6001

Mary Squire, Box 23, Mukinbudie, W.A. 6479

I would like to welcome Mary Squire to the group. As you can see above Mary lives in Western Australia and we have been severely under represented in that state in the past. Mary + family have a block of land (a farm) which includes a tree and wildflower nursery.

Another new member is Geoff Clarke, the current President of the Canberra Region. Geoff's wife Gwyn is the current leader of the Calytrix Study Group so the whole family is involved in native plants and has been for many years. I stayed with the Clarkes when I visited Canberra and thoroughly enjoyed their garden and their considerable knowledge. They gave me a form of Scaevola humilis which is distinctly different from the form I received recently from Jeanette Closs in Tasmania (which is a bit of a headache!). I have included some articles from the Canberra newsletter on Goodeniaceae with this newsletter, one of which was written by Gwyn.

Now to correspondence. I recently received an update from Gary Leske in Port Pirie. He apparently has decided to mulch his rockery areas extensively with yellow quartz pebbles. This is in line with current thinking for a large number of dryland species and his conditions do appear to be dryland. Below are comments on his garden plants.

Dampiera alata Now in part shade with a Eucalyptus caesia overhead. Growing slowly and provided a reasonable flowering display last Spring.

Dampiera diversifolia Had died back considerably to the point where I removed the original plant. Lots of suckers providing new growth. Feel I may have been overwatering it.

Dampiera lavandulacea Gave a beautiful display in Spring. New growth has appeared within a 45 cm radius of the original plant (I assume this is from suckers). Looks extremely healthy and fitting well into a corner of the rockery.

Dampiera tetragona Alive but tips of stems all have died off. Only gave a mediocre display of flowers.

Goodenia ovata Some die back but as it has layered in a number of spots, I removed the old plant and the new growth is continuing to grow rapidly.

Lechenaultia spp Generally having no trouble in keeping these alive but they are just about all chlorotic despite additions of iron. I am trying to enrich the soil with organic matter to help overcome this problem. I pruned most in Oct/Nov and they have all made rapid growth.

L. biloba The 2 plants in loam gravel on clay both gave a nice floral display and then had a burst of growth after flowering. They are now about 30 cm diameter each and would be superb except for yellowing of growing tips.

One plant in sand was removed, mainly because of its poor chlorotic appearance.

L. expansa Gave an average floral display. Suckering growth everywhere around the plant and the only species which is not chlorotic.

L. floribunda Removed because of poor chlorotic appearance.

L. laricina Both plants still growing well although some yellowing. Flowering sparse.

L. formosa (orange and prostrate) All plants still alive and flowered well last season but showing yellowish new growth. Those in sand seem to be better than those in gravel.

Scaevola humilis (previously referred to as S. aemula) Good flowering and no problems experienced. Only sparsely watered during a long hot and dry Summer. Has self-seeded with about 6 small plants growing within a 45 cm radius in clay.

S. paludosa Did not flower but has made lots of growth. Now about 60 cm x 60 cm. Healthy.

S. thesioides Good flowering display in Spring but I was forced to remove these as they were too big for the location I had originally placed them in.

S. striata Planted under shade cloth in clay (well-drained) in November. Growing well with continuous flowering.

As I mentioned above, this last Summer has been an interesting contrast with the previous 3 very wet years. Most species in my garden have been stressed but survived albeit at times in fairly poor condition. Species which appeared to survive well include Goodenia viscida, G. varia forms, Dampiera diversifolia, D. linearis (some forms better than others i.e. the fine leaf form and the form sold as D. cuneata), D. tetragona (the pink and blue form but not the fine leaf, dwarf form), Scaevola albida (white and pink forms) and an unnamed species apparently related to S. albida, S. aemula (medium leaf form which is seeding all through my garden and the Kangaroo Is form), and S. sp aff. ramossissima.

Some time ago I received some correspondence from Peter Aldridge. He had some interesting comments on Goodeniceae and an update on his garden plants. This letter was written in September last year so the times have to be adjusted.

Dampiera alata I obtained a plant about 2 months ago. It has flower buds at the moment (September).

D. diversifolia I recently obtained a couple of plants, one of which I have in a hanging basket.

D. linearis Of the three forms that I reported on last time, namely the fine leaved, whitish-leaved and "D. cuneata" forms, I only have the latter two surviving in the ground.

The whitish-leaved form is growing well and just starting to flower, though it still looks a bit plain. When it has finished flowering I will give it a fairly hard pruning.

The third form takes ages to strike from cuttings for me. The cuttings that I reported as having struck last year (2 struck) are still tiny things in tubes. There are still a number of cuttings from the original batch which haven't struck yet.

D. purpurea I obtained a plant about a month ago (August) which has flower buds now. (Editor: There are a number of forms of this species and there is no indication of where this one came.)

D. trigona My plant in a pot is just about to flower. Last time I visited Kurunga native nursery in Ringwood they were selling a plant labelled as D. trigona "dwarf". (Editor: There is such a form although I have lost it for the moment).

I also have a small leaved species which was labelled as D. disantho (Peter indicated he didn't know a species of this name and neither do I.) and another unidentified species which could be D. coronata (Editor: It isn't getting easier is it? Peter made a guess at D. rosmarinifolia var dysantha for the first one and he

may very well be right). Both species have flower buds now (September), and the latter plant tends to suffer from chlorosis. Peter has also obtained plants of D. lindleyi and D. teres, propagated by Rodger Elliott.

Goodenia bellidifolia I have small plants growing in a number of places in my garden. One plant flowered a few months ago and has just had another lone flower a few weeks ago; it is suckering.

G. geniculata This plant never really grew well; recently it slowly died back and then dropped dead.

G. lanata This is growing in a pot in a shady spot and in the garden, also in the shade. The potted plant has grown well but not flowered much. The garden plant is very spindly and is almost invisible amongst other plants. The problem may be that the spot is fairly dry.

G. macmillanii I have a plant which was originally collected near Orbost, I believe. Propagates from cuttings without difficulty.

G. hederacea var alpestris It appears that the plant I bought labelled as G. varia is probably G. hederacea var alpestris. Whatever the name, it is spreading vigorously amongst other plants, sending out long branches. I don't consider it a particularly decorative species, though the leaf shape is interesting. (Editor: see the description attached reprinted from the Canberra newsletter.)

G. viscida Growing well and suckering in a dry, shady spot.

Lechenaultia I haven't had a lot of luck with this genus. I have lost L. heteromera and one plant of L. formosa orange form. None of the other plants are what I would call flourishing. I still have L. formosa orange and prostrate red forms, L. biloba, L. laricina, and L. superba. All of the the original growth of L. superba has died back, leaving only what suckered after planting out. Perhaps the root system was disturbed when potted up in the nursery and the suckers with their new roots were unaffected when the rest of the plant died.

Scaevola aemula I lost the scrambling form when I tried to transplant it, but I have a couple of plants of "Diamond Head" still surviving.

S. ramossissima I have one surviving plant which is growing slowly and looks healthy. Another plant which was planted out at about the same time and was suckering, has died. It was in a place shaded from rain by my house where it probably dried out.

At a recent Keilor Plains meeting, Trevor Blake gave a talk on a trip he made to through Gippsland and the southern NSW coast. One of the species he showed was of a white flowered form of this species. He did not collect it, though he says that he could find it again.

S. striata One plant in a dry, shady place seems well established. It is not lush but is suckering. It has actually died out from the original place. I also have small plants scattered about in various parts of the garden.

S. "Mauve Clusters" After dying back a bit last year it has grown back to about 20 cm across. The leaves are quite small compared to

those of other plants that I have seen. I am told that those plants were growing in more shade than my plant gets.

I have also received some correspondence from Joan Hales who appears to be one of our more get-up-and go members. Joan decided to see Lake Eyre with water in it last October. I thought Study Group members would like to hear about the trip and also some observations Joan has made about her garden situation.

"We went to Muloorina Station and camped there for two nights. I was surprised and delighted at the camping area. Having been through Maree the year before and having some idea of what the country up the Birdsville Track was like it was a very pleasant surprise to find small trees and shrubs at the camping area set aside beside the Frome Creek waterhole. We even managed to have a "shower" as the bore water from the homestead runs down towards the Frome and gets cooler as it goes. Just after sunset we disappeared into the scrub near where the water was about the right temperature and while one of us srtipped and soaped the other collected the buckets of water (the story gets cleaner from here)

Lake Eyre itself I found a little disappointing. I'm not sure why but I felt it was just like climbing the sandhills here at our "backbeach" except that there were no waves. Perhaps I would have been more impressed if I had known the lake without water. We also went out there first thing in the morning and it was rather cloudy. Later in the day it became lovely and sunny but by then the traffic going out to the lake and back made it seem like a major highway. Growing out on the sandhills at the lake itself I found what I think is a Scaevola and Goodenia. I photographed both and have included them with the slides. I also took a specimen of each to help with identification. They were both attractive plants. The Scaevola particularly seemed to vary in colour from creamy yellow to one that seemed overlaid with purple.

Back at the campsite for the afternoon I went wandering in the area. There I found a Goodenia again which I think may be the same as the one at the lake but it was a smaller plant and another Scaevola type which was a very neat bushy plant but not so floriferous although perhaps it was just starting its flowering season. I have also taken photos of them and a specimen is enclosed. After consulting the books I have, I decided that the Goodenia was probably G. hirsuta. I grew a piece from the homestead and it was fine until I decided to take it out of my greenhouse and plant it in the ground. It started deteriorating and finally died. What interested me was that while it was in the greenhouse under a plastic corflute roof (and walls) it was fine although I found it seemed to need watering. It did not seem to appreciate drying out at all and a couple of times I thought I was going to lose it so I decided to plant it out in a northerly facing position in full sun in a raised bed with grey clay loam with some gravel. I watered it regularly because it was very dry (3 mm in

January) and it had seemed to require water in the greenhouse and it was newly planted.

From there we went to Arkaroola where I found one Dampiera then on to Wilpena Pound where I found another up the track on Mount Olssen Bagge but it was getting late in the afternoon by then. Photos are enclosed.

Back home again some of my garden plants were beginning to flower and some of them were to put on a fine display. Dampiera hederacea puts on a great display and is in flower again now (October 1990). It is at the other end of the narrow bed in front of the house where I planted the Goodenia. A candytuft flowers at the same time and they make a lovely combination.

In the corresponding bed on the other side of the front door I had planted a Dampiera purpurea at each end. One lasted a few months before it turned up its toes and the other is doing the same thing now nearly 12 months later. Perhaps I overwatered the first one. It may just droop in the hot weather as a natural reaction but I would water it thinking it was too dry. Perhaps it would just prefer a shadier position.

In the middle of the same bed I planted an unknown Scaevola. It is probably S. globulifera but could be S. nitida which is what I originally thought it was from a picture in one of my books but looking at it now I think the leaves are not as serrated and I have other seedlings coming up which look the same and are S. globulifera. Whatever it is it has to be one of the seeds I planted but didn't come up so I used the mix for something else. Twelve months later up comes a seedling which is clearly one from a previous planting. It was planted out and a few weeks ago the first flowers opened. Suddenly last week, literally overnight the plant began to depart from this life. All the lower leaves began to dry up and go yellow although the flowers are still opening. Two days ago I took some of the healthiest looking end shoots which are not flowering and placed them in water with a view to planting them as cuttings. Within a couple of hours they were looking up and I will plant them this afternoon. The plant had reached a size of 2 feet high by 3 feet spread in just over 12 months.

Dampiera linearis has grown and is flowering. I have 2 different colours. One was bought as D. cuneata. It is a lovely shade of blue without the purple overtones. The original plant is now dead stalks but the plant has suckered and the larger piece is flowering. The original piece was blown and twisted by the wind. The other D. linearis is flowering but is getting crowded out by Thomasia pygmaea. I also have Dampiera rosmarinifolia which is not startling but nevertheless growing reasonably and sending up some strong new shoots from the base. It is being overshadowed by Pimelea ferruginea which is about to leave us also.

At the SGAP sale on 21st Oct I bought a plant named Dampiera striatifolia. Can't find it in any book of mine and it looks like

D. rosmarinifolia to me. Also bought Dampiera sp aff alata along with Lechenaultia hirsuta, L. superba, L. biloba (light blue) and L. formosa red and orange. The L. superba is already turning up its toes and I have only had it about 10 days. All I've done is sit it out the front, still in its pot, but I must admit that I'm not sure it wasn't on its way out when I bought it. I have taken some tip growths and placed them in water and they seem to have firmed up so I shall plant them this afternoon.

When it comes to Lechenaultia I have lost quite a few. Over the winter all the L. formosa plants I had planted out passed away except for a small tip cutting (L. "prostrate red") which has been overgrown by other plants. Back in April I took cuttings and they are still in their pots in the greenhouse. I have just planted out an orange form in a more sheltered position to see if that works.

L. biloba is another question. Previously I have planted out and lost a number of them. Last summer I saw my potted plant wilting again on a hot day so I took it out to my greenhouse. It revived. There it remained to be watered daily with my orchids in an atmosphere which can be fairly humid at times. No problems. I took cuttings in April and used a hormone powder with on elot and none with the other. If anything the hormone powder appeared to retard the rooting slightly. A couple of months ago as the plant was coming into bud I decided to move the pot out into the garden still in its pot but to put it among other plants. It is flowering well however we have had 3 days in succession with the temperature over 30 and it does not like it. I feel that we Easterners have been somewhat brainwashed about WA. I was under the impression that we have difficulty with many western plants because they come from "dry" WA and here in the East it is too wet. Perhaps Sydney and Brisbane are BUT Perth has a higher rainfall than Melbourne, Adelaide, Hobart and Canberra. I have enclosed a chart. Certainly Melbourne's rain is more evenly spread but even then the chart gives the impression that Melbourne has "wet" summers when it doesn't.

Secondly, my husband and I were in WA in 1988. I was most surprised to find L. biloba growing along the side of the road up in the hills behind Perth. These hills can have annual rainfall as high as 50 inches per year. Here was a plant that I had thought grew in dry inland areas with probably around 15 inches per year. Chances are it isn't as hot in the hills either. The only other thought I have had is to wonder whether some plants such as L. biloba cannot tolerate their black plastic pots getting very hot when the weather is hot.

During the last week of March this (1990) my daughter and I went on a trip to the south coast of NSW. I collected cuttings of Scaevola calendulacea and S. ramossissima which has been so successful. I have two pieces that have survived but the last time I looked they did not have roots although one is sending out new growth.

A couple of weeks ago I bought a Scaevola albida. It needs water.

I planted it into the garden but it died. I went to dig it out and plant it somewhere else and discovered it was sending up shoots from the roots so I salvaged a piece and planted it in a pot in my greenhouse where it is just starting to flower. I also bought a Goodenia ovata "Green Cape" form. It grows well but must be kept well watered. If it dries out at all it will lose all its lower leaves. It is a prostrate form and grows well in a hanging basket if you are careful. I have not planted it out but cuttings strike easily.

Happy gardening

Dennis Margan

Goodeniaceae - The 'Goodies'

The following are notes on plants in this family grown by members in and around the Canberra Region.

Gwyn Clarke

For spectacular plants, you cannot go past the Goodeniaceae. Picture those carpets of scarlet and blue, not to mention yellow, orange, pink, white and two-tone, courtesy of the *Lechenaultias*; masses of purple from the *Dampieras*; *Scaevolas* in blues, pinks and whites and the golden *Goodenias* (generally speaking). These are probably the most well-known genera of the family, with thousands of native plant enthusiasts (and others), desperate to grow them.

Many of them have their home in W.A. and therefore may not be easy to grow in the eastern states. Some of the eastern species also have problems, but are we discouraged? No! No! No! After all, you can grow them in pots if they don't like Canberra's heavy clay, or you can put up with them dying - just treat them like annuals. Some people do.

Of course, just growing them in pots wasn't good enough for us. The challenge of keeping them growing in the garden had to be accepted, so over the years many of these dazzling plants have found their way into our garden. Generally, they are very easy to grow from cuttings, so you can keep up a ready supply to replace those that have died, and save money into the bargain. If you forget or don't get round to it, you'll be very popular at your favourite nursery.

In spite of the pessimism in the initial paragraphs we have succeeded in growing a number of plants from these genera. When they grow well they are superb garden subjects. The local *Goodenia hederacea* is a very good example. In the bush this is often quite a small plant with a few golden flowers. Give it garden conditions and it will spread to cover 1/2 metre in two or three years, with a long flowering period (Nov - May) and no objections to local soil. A close local relation, *Velleia paradoxa* will probably be just as successful. Its yellow flowers are held above the plant on flowering spikes. It is certainly long flowering in a pot, and suckers well.

Other *Goodenias* we have tried include *G. varia*, *G. macmillanii*, *G. lanata*, *G. bellidifolia*, and *G. ovata*. *G. varia*, as its name implies, has many forms. The one we have growing is a small plant (20cm x 20cm). Its bright green foliage contrasts well with the yellow flowers. Again it is long flowering, and is about ten years old. *G. macmillanii* is a pink-flowering, prostrate plant which spreads by suckering. It is only found in two river valleys in the Snowy Mountains area. We have only been able to keep it alive for a short time in the garden, but have it growing well in pots. I believe that it will do better in heavier soil on a southerly site instead of the warm well-drained sandy soil and northerly aspect we provided so we will try again. *G. lanata* is still happy in its pot after three years. *G. bellidifolia* died. *G. ovata* is yet to prove itself.

Goodenia hederacea Sm. var. *alpestris* Krause

Geoff Butler

Family: Goodeniaceae.

Derivation: *Goodenia* - after Rev. S. Goodenough (1743-1827) who worked on sedges and seaweed; Treasurer of the Linnaean Society.

hederacea - after the genus *Hedera* (ivy).
alpestris - from high elevations.

Common Name: Ivy Goodenia.



Varieties and Forms: The genus *Goodenia* is currently under revision and *Goodenia hederacea* may be affected by the creation of more subspecies. *G. hederacea* var. *alpestris* is, however, very distinct from the variety *hederacea*. The main distinguishing features are its growth habit; obovate to orbicular (rounded) leaves; and glossy leaves compared to the slightly glaucous leaves of var. *hederacea*.

Flowers: About 2 cm in diameter and yellow to orange-yellow in colour. The flowers can be from one to three in the leaf axils, but are more commonly solitary in this variety. The main flowering period is from November to March, but some flowers can be found over most of the year.

Growth Habit: A perennial herb with a thickened rootstock. Very compact and self layers from the prostrate stems.

Height: Prostrate.

Width: From 200 to 300 mm..

Natural Distribution: Semi-shaded but more often open situations at high elevations (see map) in NSW and Victorian highlands.

Habitat: Woodlands consisting mainly of Snow Gum, also more open sites.

Climatic Tolerance: Tolerates severe frosts and can also experience snow cover at times. Withstands prolonged spells by dying back to the rootstock and re-shooting when the weather is suitable.

Propagation: Easy to grow from softish tip cuttings. Self layers can be removed to start new plants. Always select material from better flowered forms.

Additional Comments: This plant has a great deal of potential for horticulture in domestic situations but is not often used. It likes acid soils, but may be difficult to establish on natural soils in Canberra. It responds well when grown in artificial soil media. Recommended for rock gardens, improved soil beds, hanging baskets and pots. Always ensure the maximum sunlight hours per day are received.

Scaevolas provide some excellent ground covers as well as small bushy herbaceous shrubs. *S. humilis* suckers well, has bright green foliage and is smothered in small blue flowers for many months. It is a superb plant, often outperforming and outliving those more showy relatives which at first we may prefer. *S. albida* is a small arching shrub - 30cm x 60cm. Flowers may be blue, white or pink and provide a great summer and autumn show. It is very hardy, growing well in the local soil as well as sandy raised beds. We have not had great success with *S. aemula*, but we should probably try again as it is a very beautiful ground cover. If you have a house at the coast you should certainly grow it there. It is not deterred by salt or strong winds. *S. striata* is the other member of this genus in our garden. This is a W.A. plant with large mauve flowers in spring. It suckers readily, and while it has not covered a large area, it has made a niche for itself in a raised rockery bed. As it has been there five years I think it has done well.

Dampieras are not well represented, but *D. diversifolia* from W.A. has done very well in a shady raised bed and also in an easterly site with early morning sun only, improved local soil, and overhead shade from a very large *E. macarthurii*. *D. purpurea* is also doing well under the same eucalypt and gets very little sun. This member of the genus could be considered almost a local as it grows at Bungonia Gorge. *D. stricta* is doing well in a pot, but as yet no success in the garden. Maybe we should try it under the same tree.

The genus that has given us most trouble is *Leschenaultia* and it's not just the spelling - though that's bad enough. In spring 1981 we were privileged to visit South Western W.A. I soon found out why we have such problems. Good drainage means gravel about 10cms thick over a culvert. There, in that most inhospitable of sites, was the most magnificent prostrate *L. biloba*. Geoff has the slide to prove it. *L. formosa* made a red carpet in flat country near the Stirling Ranges. It looked like it would be a bog in winter and baked earth in summer. Many of this genera grow in sandy areas of low rainfall, and most of the rain comes in winter. Well, I don't think I'll report our failures - too many. *L. formosa* 'orange' has proved to be the hardest member of the genus in our garden. We planted it in a bed on the northerly side of the house where it receives no summer rain. It flowers faithfully from May to November and has attempted to sucker, but *Kennedia prostrata* has hindered it. However, it's now six or seven years old and if it died tomorrow I'd still think we've had our money's worth, and I'd certainly be replacing it.

Let some members of the Goodeniaceae find their way into your garden. They'll give lots of pleasure and most of them are just what you were looking for for that little spot in the rockery, or for that small space that needs covering. Remember, they're not all difficult to grow.

Jo Walker

There are two members of the Goodeniaceae growing in the Wamboin area - *Goodenia hederacea* and *Velleia paradoxa*. *Goodenia hederacea* is a small plant with

straggly stems arising from a tuft or rosette of dark green, spatulate and slightly toothed leaves. This species usually grows amongst grasses or in leaf litter under trees, and sports at least a few of its bright yellow flowers during all but the winter months. It makes a hardy garden plant and will form a loose mat after a while. It does best in dappled shade.

Goodenia hederacea var. *alpestris* found in mountain areas around the region (it grows along the roadside at Piccadilly Circus). This plant has almost round, notched leaves, shiny on the upper surface, and gold-yellow flowers. Its habit of rooting readily at nodes in contact with the soil means that it can form a quite dense mat under garden conditions.

Velleia paradoxa has several bright yellow flowers on each of several 10-15 cm stalks arising from a rosette of soft green spatulate leaves. There are three or four good patches of this plant growing along the Sutton Road on almost bare clay slopes along the roadside.

I have two *Goodenias* growing in the garden. One, *Goodenia varia*, is a semi-prostrate scrambling little plant. It has rather leathery, shiny, almost lanceolate leaves and slender yellow flowers. New growth is sticky. It has a wide natural distribution - NSW through Victoria to South Australia - growing mostly in red sands in semi-arid regions (this one came from a cutting taken beyond Balranald on the Lake Mungo road). It has been frost-hardy to date. The other, *Goodenia macmillanii*, is unusual in a genus with mostly yellow flowers - its flowers are pink, quite large (2-2.5 cm) and have a fragrant somewhat lemony scent. Leaves are lobed and toothed. This one is doing well in heavy soil behind a retaining wall in full sun. Its natural habitat is in the valleys of the Snowy and McAlister Rivers in Victoria.

The only other member of the Goodeniaceae in my garden is *Dampiera diversifolia*. I had one 'growing' in my previous garden in Queanbeyan - in actual fact, it stayed the same size that it had been when purchased for something like five years. It flowered sporadically, but obviously didn't care for heavy clay soils. It is, after all, a Western Australian species. When I was planting the rockery at the front of the house here at Wamboin, I decided to give this plant another go. As it had done so poorly for me before, it was allotted only a small pocket at the base of the rockery. It started growing as soon as its roots touched soil (this is really a misnomer - the rockery consists of loamy clay, shale and other rock and has the consistency of concrete when dry). This plant had soon outgrown its allotted space, and is now creeping across its neighbours. It flowers prolifically, and, at the height of its flowering, you can't see the leaves for its bright blue flowers. Although the soil it's growing in is unpromising, the slope gives it good drainage. It also faces north-west, so that even in winter it is a warm corner although it is open to frosts which can be quite heavy here. This species may be a bit choosy about where it will grow, but if you can persuade it to flourish in your garden the carpet of blue flowers is a great reward.

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