

AUSTRALIAN PLANTS FOR CONTAINERS STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER NO. 6.

We are shivering in below average temperatures and above average rainfall so our summer prognosis for the Riverina is probably bushfires.

I am waging a constant war on snails, caterpillars and various other marauding insects. Unfortunately my *Crocea exalta*, which was adversely affected in the late summer has not recovered to any great extent and I am seriously thinking of planting it out into the garden to see if it will recover.

The *Darwinia leiostyla* planted in June is still a delight - I have it against a brick wall (well under the eaves) which faces north west, so it enjoys all of the available winter sunshine with the back up of reflected heat. Its pinkish red bell shaped flowers are very persistent and it is a very attractive container plant.

Annette Hallpike asks for suggestions for a prostrate *Acacia* that would be suitable to graft onto taller stocks. If you have any suggestions for Annette her address is 18 Daffodil Road, Boronia. Victoria. 3155. I would be pleased to pass on any information to Annette, too.

Bill Watkins lost a lot of his container plants in the extremely dry weather the Sydney area has experienced this year. Bill feels that with some of the short lived plants such as *Boronias* we will have to experiment more with grafting onto sturdier stocks. He has experimented with *Grevillea* "Robyn Gordon" and *Grevillea* "Royal Mantle" onto *G. robusta* stocks and *Prostanthera* sp. onto *Westringia* and in the late autumn, even without a glass house they appeared to be doing well.

I would like to hear from our members who have tried grafts - details of scion, under stock, type of graft and rate of survival, please.

Bill also reports on a watering system demonstrated at a nurseryman's exhibition recently. The device consists of about 9 micro plastic tubes which were attached to a central junction. This was taped into the 13 mm black plastic tube used in trickle systems. Each tube delivers about 1½ litres per hour, so five of them would keep 45 pots well soaked. Bill had made a similar system which watered four pots thoroughly - its only disadvantage was the necessity to move it to the next four pots which proved very time consuming but he suggests that a multiple of the 9 tube feeder could prove to be a permanent and economic system.

Graeme Mee, who lives in Singleton, N.S.W., reports that he has divided all of his *Anigozanthos* sp. and all seem very healthy with the exception of "Dwarf Delight" which suffers badly from black spot in his area.

His *Banksia serata* has flowered again and the following appear to be thriving - *B. ericifolia*, *B. integrifolia*, *B. robur* and *B. praemorsa*. He is also having success with rain forest plants, growing in a shade house on the south eastern side of the house. His collection includes *Castanospermum australis* (easy to grow from seed), *Araucaria bidwillii*, *Araucaria heterophylla*, *Acmena smithii*, *Brachiichiton acerfolius* and *Stenocarpus sinuatus*.

My thanks to all of you who have paid their 1986-87 subscriptions. Best wishes for successful container gardening.

Maynard Barbour
STUDY LEADER.