

INTRODUCTION

There has not been a great deal of contact between members over the past twelve months. This is mainly my fault, due to pressure of other activities (notably the N.S.W. Region Seed Bank). Please feel free to contact me at any time with information, seed requests, etc.

In particular, I would like to ascertain the progress from the original seed sowings some years ago. Those members who were able to plant out seedlings from those sowings might like to let me know how they are progressing.

SEED BANK

The following species are available (some in very small quantities) at 20 cents per packet:-

anisandra, anisandra (capsules), dampierii, decussata (capsules), elegans, eriocephala, heterophylla, heterophylla (capsules), macrostemon, micrantha, micrantha (capsules), orbifolia, schaueri, sparsa, squarrosa, purpurea.

PROPAGATION BY GRAFTING

This project has been struggling along for a couple of years with little to report. One of the problems (apart from compatibility) appears to be convincing people that they have the ability to carry out a successful graft. If you can strike a cutting, you have sufficient skills for grafting.

To develop confidence try grafting a Prostanthera (such as P. nivea) onto Westringia fruticosa using the top wedge graft. This is quite easy after a little practice. Once a technique has been developed experiments with Beaufortias can be commenced.

With Beaufortias, as there is no species which could be regarded as being consistently reliable in the eastern states, the search for a stock plant must be directed towards other genera. Kunzea ambigua has been suggested but the National Botanic Gardens have now given it away. They are now using Callistemon citrinus and have successfully grafted B. micrantha onto it (they have also grafted Bremaea beaufortioides onto C. citrinus and not K. ambigua as indicated in the last newsletter). Thus C. citrinus is a good starting point in the search for a stock plant but there appears to be no reason why other hardy Callistemon species (or species of other genera such as Melaleuca) could not be tried.

Another stock which could be looked at is Regelia ciliata. This is closely related to Beaufortia and would probably have a good chance of success. Unfortunately it is not as hardy as would be preferred but it is certainly more hardy than any Beaufortia (at least in Sydney).

For those who do not have access to any references on grafting I have enclosed with this newsletter a pamphlet produced by the N.S.W. Region on propagation generally. Grafting is covered briefly in the pamphlet (in sufficient detail to get people started anyway).

I find the most convenient graft is the "cutting graft" in which propagation of the stock and the graft are done at the same time. This works quite well with Prostantheras and is more convenient than conventional grafts. On the debit side there are more areas where failure can occur (it's a cruel twist of fate if the graft takes and the stock won't form roots....)

Nescofilm; This product was developed for the pharmaceutical industry and is a self-adhesive transparent film which is ideal for use as a grafting tape when cut into strips. It avoids the necessity of trying to secure knots on small diameter material. The Blue Mountains Group of SGAP is attempting (with difficulty) to obtain a supply and if any member would like some let me know and I will send it when (and if) I can.

Any member who knows of a distributor for the product might like to let me know.

BEAUFORTIAS.....GENERAL DESCRIPTIONS (Continued)

An additional reference to those listed in newsletter No. 8 :-

"Western Australian Native Plants in Cultivation"...Fairall.

Beaufortia heterophylla.....Stirling Range Bottlebush

The specific name refers to the variations in the leaves.

A small, compact shrub rarely exceeding 1 metre in height by a similar spread. It occurs in gravelly soils in the Stirling Ranges and in

some areas to the north-east of the Range.

Flowers occur in clusters along the branches and are scarlet or purplish-red in colour and very showy. Flowers are at their best in September and October but may be seen between August and March.

Leaves are narrow, linear and heath-like, 4 to 10 mm. long.

Fruits are woody capsules arranged around the stem in globular clusters about 10 mm. in diameter. This species appears to retain some seed within the capsules and mechanical extraction may be an advantage.

This is one of the most spectacular and desirable species but is also quite difficult in cultivation. It should be grown in well drained, sandy gravel in light shade.

Beaufortia decussata

The specific name refers to the arrangement of the leaves whereby leaves are in opposite pairs with each succeeding pair being at right angles to the previous pair.

A tall, erect shrub to 2.5 metres which occurs in the lower south western corner of W.A. in sandy gravel.

Flowers are bright red 'bottlebrushes' and appear in late summer and autumn. Flower buds are reported to appear up to twelve months before the flowers open.

Leaves are decussate, ovate in shape 12 to 15 mm. long by about 8 mm. wide.

Fruits are woody capsules about 6 mm. long by 6 mm. diameter. Seed is difficult to extract without the use of some mechanical equipment.

In cultivation this species requires a well drained situation in sun or semi-shade.

Beaufortia elegans

The specific name means 'graceful' and presumably refers to the overall appearance of the shrub.

A small, compact shrub to about 1.5 metres high and wide. It occurs on sandy soils in the northern parts of the South-western Botanical Province, sometimes on the edges of swamps.

Flowers are in dense, ovoid or oblong spikes, rose red or purple in colour. Flowering occurs between September and February.

Leaves are decussate, ovoid in shape, 3-6 mm. in length.

Fruits are woody capsules probably arranged around the stem in globular clusters. I have no information regarding ease of seed extraction.

In cultivation a sandy soil in sun or semi-shade is required.

Judging by its natural habitate, an assured availability of moisture would be required.....but well-drained.

B. elegans var. minor :- This variety differs from B. elegans in the leaves which are mostly 2 mm. long, and in the smaller, deep pink flowers occurring mostly in globular heads.

Beaufortia macrostemon

The specific name means 'large stamens' and is self-explanatory.

A small, bushy shrub to 1 metre high and wide with many slender branches arising from a lignotuber from which it regenerates after fire. It occurs in the Darling and Stirling districts of the South-western Botanical Province.

Flowers occur in clusters about 25 mm. wide by a similar length, upright and spreading. Colour is orange-red to deep red. Flowers occur terminally, the stem continuing to grow on after flowering. Flowering period is spring and early summer.

Leaves are narrow lanceolate about 10 mm. long by 2 mm. wide.

Fruits are woody capsules. I have no information on ease of seed extraction.

In cultivation a well-drained sandy soil in sun or semi-shade would probably give best results.

PROPAGATION FROM CUTTINGS....Summary of returned questionnaires

The following information has been extracted from members' completed questionnaires. Unfortunately the number of questionnaires returned was quite small and it is difficult to draw any meaningful conclusions. The following notes should therefore be treated with caution.

Generally the time of taking cuttings was not particularly important, however, more work on this aspect is required especially for those

species which showed poor strike rates. Best results were achieved with firm, new growth...older wood should be avoided. Most growers used a hormone preparation on the base of cuttings and this seems to be beneficial (see Newsletter No. 3). At least two members use a fungicide spray at regular intervals.

There appears to be some variation between species in the ease of striking. Based on results available, *B. sparsa*, *decussata*, *elegans* and *anisandra* seem to strike readily. Of the other species attempted results are inconsistent. In my own case where cuttings of a number of species have been subjected to the same treatment, those mentioned above struck readily while *B. orbifolia*, *incana*, *squarrosa*, *purpurea*, *schaueri*, *heterophylla* and *micrantha* showed varying success rates (none of which would be regarded as satisfactory). Other individual members have had better results with some of these 'difficult' species. Information from members is needed regarding the propagation of these species from cuttings.

Beaufortia sparsa

No. of Reports Received	Date of taking cuttings	Location	Time to Strike (weeks)	% Strike	Comments
3	June	Horsham(V)	8	75	No. 2 hormone, mist, heat
	Oct.	Toronto(N)	4-5	100	
	Mar.	Castlereagh(N)	6-8	90	No. 2 hormone

Analysis:- One of the easiest species to propagate. Very sensitive to over-watering after potting-on.

Beaufortia decussata

2	Sept.	Toronto(N)	7	90	
	Oct.	Sydney	6-8	90	No. 2 hormone

Analysis:- As for *B. sparsa*.

Beaufortia elegans

2	-	Gatton(Q)	4	60	
	Oct.	Sydney	6-8	80	No. 2 hormone

Analysis:- Appears to be reasonably easy to propagate but one report indicates a high loss rate after potting on. Early planting out may be desirable.

Beaufortia orbifolia

3	June	Horsham(V)	8	75	No. 2 hormone, mist, heat
	April	Ringwood(V)	8	50	No. 2 hormone
	Oct.	Sydney	12	10	No. 2 hormone

Analysis:- Variable results....appears to be hardier than most once planted out and is attractive in both foliage and flower. Definitely one to persist with.

Beaufortia incana

2	Mar.	Ringwood(V)	8	100	No. 2 hormone
	Oct.	Sydney	-	0	No. 2 hormone

Analysis:- Further work needed. Time of taking cuttings may be important.

Beaufortia schaueri

2	July	Ringwood(V)	8	50	No. 2 hormone
	Oct.	Castlereagh(N)	12	10	No. 2 hormone

Analysis:- As for *B. orbifolia*.

Beaufortia squarrosa

2	May	Ringwood(V)	7	80	No. 2 hormone
	May	Castlereagh(N)	-	0	No. 2 hormone

Analysis:- As for *B. incana*.

Beaufortia heterophylla

No. of Reports Received	Date of taking cuttings	Location	Time to strike (weeks)	% Strike	Comments
I	Oct.	Sydney	8-12	20	No. 2 hormone

Analysis:- Limited quantity of material available...more work needed.

Beaufortia micrantha

I	Oct.	Sydney	8-12	10	No. 2 hormone
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Analysis:- As for B. heterophylla.

Beaufortia anisandra

I	Oct.	Sydney	8	80	No. 2 hormone
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Analysis:- Appears reasonably easy to propagate. Lack of material a problem.

MEMBERS NOTES

Thanks to all members who have written. The following is extracted from some of those letters.

Leila Huebner (Nelson, Vic.) notes that damping off losses are a serious problem even when a fungicide is used. Further losses occur following transplanting seedlings from punnets to individual tubes. Leila recommends sowing a few seeds into individual tubes initially to avoid this problem.

Kay and Colin Dean (Penguin, Tas.) report *B. sparsa*, *schaueri* and *orbifolia* doing well in the garden but have found *B. heterophylla* difficult to establish with many losses in a number of situations.....*B. heterophylla* is probably one of the most difficult species, but it is such a spectacular small plant that it is one we must persist with.

Julie Smyrna-Jones (Dodges Ferry, Tas.) reports reasonable success with *B. sparsa* planted in a clay bank where a good water supply is available. Other plants of *B. sparsa* planted in well drained sand have not done as well due to the dry weather conditions.....*B. sparsa* grows naturally in swampy areas so it is reasonable to expect that it would prefer an ample supply of moisture in cultivation. However, I understand that even in nature the swampy areas dry out in summer and the plant would rely almost entirely on capillary water for survival. The message would seem to be that water is necessary ...but not boggy conditions.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

Fees for 1981 are due on 1 January so please forward yours as soon as possible (if due)

Your subscription for 1981 (\$2.00) is/is not due.

FINANCIAL STATEMENT (1 March 1980 to 30 Nov. 1980)

<u>INCOME</u>		<u>EXPENDITURE</u>	
Brought forward	-\$ 0.43	Correspondence	\$ 8.87
Membership fees	\$31.00	Printing Newsletter	\$ 3.12
Seed sales	\$13.26	Stationary	\$ 2.52
Donations	\$ 2.00	Seed purchases	\$25.20
Totals	\$45.83		\$39.71
Balance	\$ 6.12		

FINALLY

The drought in N.S.W. has made establishment of my new native plantings very time consuming. Most of the small *Beaufortias* are doing reasonably well in the dry conditions so that, at least, is one consolation. But I'd gladly tolerate a few losses for a few days of continuous rain.

As is usual, this Newsletter has been produced much later than I had hoped. However, the delay gives me the opportunity to extend to all members best wishes for Christmas and the New Year.

Brian Walters
Study Group Leader