

ASGAP BRACHYCHITON & ALLIED GENERA STUDY GROUP

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Membership matters : Welcome to new members Donna Flynn (Kingaroy, Qld.), Attila Kapitany (Boronia, Vic.), Alex Moutsitatos (Macleay, Qld.) & Kris Kupsch (Cairns, Qld.). Subs are still \$5 in Australia & \$10 for overseas, & run from July in one year to June in the next. The 1-line table below shows your finances as per my records.

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|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|
| 99-00 | 00-01 | 01-02 | 02-03 | 03-04 | 04-05 | >05 |
|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-----|

Cotyledon genetics : The species of Section Brachychiton, which contains the the largest group of species, & most of the red or pink-flowering spp., are unique among the 5 sections in having cryptocotylar germination, in which the cotyledons do not emerge from the seed. All the hybrids from *B. bidwillii* (in this section) have a first visible leaf similar to later ones, so the 'hidden-cotyledon' gene must be dominant. *B. discolor*, *spectabilis* & *vitifolius* are in Section Brachychiton, & *acerifolius* & *populneus* are not.

Colour forms in *B. x roseus* : Fig. 1 is of a form of *B. x roseus* photographed in Melbourne by Andrew Garnham, & seems a little darker than *B. 'Belladonna'*, the most popular form of *B x roseus* in Qld. It may be *B. 'Jerilderie Red'*, made a little darker by the cooler weather in Melbourne. I find pink roses flowering here in the cooler months are considerably darker than those flowering in hot months. And some white roses, like 'Iceberg', show a fair bit of pink in cool months, a phenomenon also shown in some other genera.

Hibiscus : I haven't had time to look at the 'Greater Malvaceae' case by some botanists who wish to include the Sterculiaceae in the former family, but did collect several *Hibiscus* spp. in a 15-day visit to the N. T. starting on June 1st. Some had seed but no flowers, & I won't know the species until the resultant seedlings flower.

N.T Brachy flowers : It was too early for most Brachychitons to be in flower, in June, but some *B. megaphyllum* were in full flower. Most brachys flower in late winter & spring, before the rains start, so their seeds are ready for the Wet.

Paintings : Member Jean Dennis from Benalla in Victoria is about to trek through N.Qld., including her second visit to Cape York, in search of those Brachychitons that she hasn't yet painted, including the hybrid *B. x allochrous* from north of Coen. She has given several talks on her work, & had an article in 'The Australian Wildlife' magazine. While in California recently she visited the Huntington Library & Gardens, where at least 9 spp. of Brachychiton were growing very vigorously. She found public transport cheap & efficient in much of L.A.

Leaf Fall : Some individual plants of *B. spectabilis*, *spectabilis x bidwillii*, *viscidulus* (in past years, all), *megaphyllum* & *garrowayae* have lost all their leaves, while others nearby have not. All *bidwillii x acerifolius* are still fully evergreen. A *B.garrowayae* in my bottom-heated hotbox is growing new leaves rapidly, as are some Madagascan spp. of *Adansonia* (baobabs).

Bottle trees in N. America : Fig. 2 shows a hazard surmounted, in a fine Qld. bottletree belonging to member Al Guhl of Tucson, Arizona. It had a 'growing-pains' crack being vigorously widened & deepened by an energetic woodpecker, until a mesh guard was placed over the area under attack. A bottletree's soft tissue made easy boring for the bird, no doubt. Al sent me a photocopied leaf of a brachy being sold locally as *B. bidwillii*, which was clearly *B. discolor*.



FIG. 2



FIG. 1