

SOCIETY FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS.

CALYTRIX STUDY GROUP-NEWSLETTER NO.4. 1984. JULY 1984.

Dear Calytrix Members,

My name is Gwyn Clarke, and I have recently taken over as leader of the group. As it has been in recess for some time I am mailing this newsletter to all those who have been members of the group, and any others who have contributed to the group in any way.

My first step was to familiarize myself with the group's past activities, so I spent some time reading through the records sent to me by Joan Doney. The information collected by Joan from various members is of value to us as a guide for future work with this genus. Perhaps I should summarize some of that information here.

GERMINATION OF CALYTRIX

- 1) Remove calyx and awns from seed.
- 2) Push seed point down into seed mix. The top of the seed to be level with seed mix.
- 3) Successful seed mixes included:
 - a) Washed river sand.
 - b) W.R.S. and Perlite.
 - c) Perlite.
 - d) Growrite seed mix.
 - e) Other coarse mixes.
 Sterility was important - seed damped off readily. Other mixes showed some success but did not have the high germination rates of the above (60%-80% for some species).
- 4) Methods of watering included - bog method, capillary bed, hand watering with a fine spray.
- 5) They liked warmth but could not tolerate very high humidity.
- 6) Potting on should be as soon as possible to avoid:
 - a) Damping off - fungal attack.
 - b) Root disturbance - roots are very long and fine, and become detached easily.
- 7) Planting in situ might be successful.
- 8) Temperature for germination ranged from 10°C-23°C. Too much heat appeared detrimental.
- 9) There were problems with some seeds, and experiments are needed to determine optimum seed age for each species. Questions to be answered include:
 - a) How long does seed remain viable?
 - b) Do some species have a dormancy period?
 - c) Is seed susceptible to insect attack?

CARE OF SEEDLINGS.

A great deal more information is needed in this area. Suffice

to say the following points should be kept in mind:

- 1) Coarse mixes should be used, and only small amounts of fertilizer should be used ($\frac{1}{2}$ strength aquasol or similar).
- 2) Humidity causes grey mould and perhaps other fungal attack. However small plants need warm semi-shaded spots away from hot sun. Pots could be kept under other plants on North or East sides of house or other buildings.
- 3) Calytrix dislike disturbance to their roots. You may want to plant in situ giving some protection while young. Drip watering would keep leaves free of moisture.
- 4) Raised beds or mounds give the good drainage these plants like. Clay loams may need gypsum and washed river sand added.
- 5) Those lucky enough to live in a wet winter, hot summer climate like W.A. may find they have more success than others. The rest of us may have to simulate it.

If members have further information to support, add to or contradict any information included here, please let me know.

At present I do not have much information on work with cuttings or grafting, and I realize that the availability of both seed and cutting material has been a major problem for this group in the past which resulted in the group going into recess. I hope with the co-operation of newsletter editors, to try to overcome this problem. If you are still interested in working with this genus and would like to continue or renew your membership please forward \$2 to me at the following address;

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