

ASGAP Correa Study Group

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Dear Members,

Newsletter No. 20
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Here it is December already and I still haven't completed this newsletter. Somehow other things always seem to intrude and ensure that my newsletters are never on time. Perhaps I should do away with the June and November headings and just call them No 1 and 2. From your wonderful comments I know that you all enjoy reading these bulletins so I shall continue to produce them in my rather haphazard way and beg your patience if they arrive a little late.

The latest Tasmanian journal made a dig about my reporting on the July Correa trip in the June newsletter, claiming that this was a somewhat 'remarkable' achievement. I agree, but I feel my critics lack a sense of humour and a sense of serendipity. It would be a rather boring world if everything happened according to plan as though we all lived programmed lives. Imagine a world without the threat of Y2K! It would be rather dull. Anyway, enough of that.

We have been experiencing a magnificent spring, the best we've seen for years and everything in the garden is growing beautifully. The nice thing about Correa plants is that it doesn't take all that long for most plants to reach their maximum size and they begin to flower in the first season. The Tasmanian cuttings have almost all been potted on now and apart from a few losses, I've had a pretty good strike. Some are ready for planting now.

I've given talks on the Tassie trip to both Armidale and Glen Innes groups, showing slides that we took of all the plants collected. I now have access to a slide scanner so am able to input images into the computer directly from my slides. This allows me to illustrate articles with graphics rather than my usual pencil sketches. Not only can I illustrate articles but I can now establish an electronic library of Correa slides which can be used by researchers. I'm always amazed at the advances in computer technology. Arthur C. Clarke claims that we will have intelligent computers before too long which will think as well as humans. Let's hope they take as their models the better humans of this world

rather than the misfits. Now if only someone would come up with a device that helped me remember where my car keys are, or my glasses, or that person's name..... I know what you're thinking - old age - it happens to the best of us. I guess you're right.

Over the past few weeks, I have been spending many late nights programming for the new HSC. The changes to senior programs are substantial and require a lot of detailed planning. I shall have a full load of classes again next year plus an extra Year 8 class. I shall also be hosting an Assistant teacher from Germany and am quite looking forward to working with her. Somehow I shall still find time to play around with Correas. There are no more big trips planned but there are quite a lot of gaps in the collections. This is where you can help. I shall put in a list of locations and perhaps some of you may have the opportunity to travel there and collect for the group.

As this is the last Correa newsletter of the century, it's probably time to do a little reflecting on the past 100 years and make a few predictions for the future. I believe that we have turned the corner as far as environmental awareness is concerned but it has been too late for many plant species which are extinct or almost so. Correas tend to be vulnerable to grazing and there are many sites now where once abundant populations have been reduced to unsustainable numbers. It is so important to collect and record from as many wild populations as possible before it's too late.

We need to continue our partnerships with botanical organisations and be prepared to donate plant material for enrichment and revegetation projects. At the same time it is vital that we explore every avenue to get Correas out into the marketplace so that they are grown by as many people as possible. In the meantime have a happy and safe Christmas and a SUPER BONZER FANTASTIC NEW YEAR. See you in 2000!

Maria Hitchcock

Don is keen to discover good forms to register. For some reason he has the right conditions for seedlings to establish. we should see a few of Don's plants in the trade before too long. Ed.

Lloyd Carman writes:

In your reply to Pat Howes you mentioned that you weren't aware that *Correa decumbens* also occurs in the Mt Lofty ranges. I have known of this *Correa* for about 40 years and collected it from the Onkaparinga River area near Kangarilla. As I remember, the habit of the plant was a prostrate, ground hugging form about 1 m across by 10-20 cm high. The height may have been influenced by browsing by kangaroos, rabbits, etc. This area was once open to the public who used the river area to picnic or fish. It is now fenced off.

We are always delighted when a new seedling flowers and shows a different characteristic. Overall the diversity amongst our seedlings is in the leaf shape, flower shape and coloration, then followed by the habit of the plant which goes from prostrate through to tall and upright.

We have started naming those with promise and growing them on to maturity to assess hardiness, attractiveness, novelty and suitability in garden situations where soil type and pH may vary. We are fortunate in having a son who lives over the hill about 5 or 6 kms away where the garden conditions are quite different to our own. he likes *Correas* and other native plants and is willing to trial some for me.

Last year when it was a real trial to bend over and dig up the small *Correa* seedlings to pot up, we left many in the ground to fend for themselves. Some germinated on a clay and rocky bank about 0.5 to 1 m high and about 7 m long. This had a good dressing of gypsum to open up the surface of the soil. Roughly there would be about 100 plants growing here and many were crowded very close together, they would now average 30-40 cm in height and there is a wide variation in leaf shape and size and in flower shape, size and colour.

I have discovered a small thin grub which chewed away the upper surface of the leaf causing browning and disfigurement. Also we have found that large furry caterpillars quickly denude young leaves and tender shoots of plants both large and small.

It sounds like there will be a few gems originating in the Carman's' garden. This is very

exciting and it's good to hear that they are being trialled in another garden. How do you control the pests? Ed.

Rosemary Pedler writes:

On a field trip in the Southern Flinders last month, we explored a beautiful Heritage-protected area of mallee Box woodland and found some *Correas*, about a dozen plants, each separated from the other by a few metres. Each was different in appearance and flower colour, although of course, obviously related. Upper leaf surfaces were dark green and glossy, underside of leaves were variously tomentose (hairy), either lightly or thickly. Leaf shape ranged from narrow and recurved to broader and only very slightly so.

The flowers were the most variable, from a total dull red to a combination of light pink and creamy green, to cheerful red and rusty yellow and other variations. Some were small, others large and strong. The leaves of all had that typical 'glabra' smell when crushed. The Heritage area is over 1000 acres and these are the only *Correas* to have been found in it in spite of several plant surveys. *Correas* are not uncommon along the fire track on top of the ranges nearby and seem to be a mix of *C. glabra* and *C. reflexa*. They are vigorous bushes, which enjoy a rainfall of between 500 and 750 mm per annum. Elevation is roughly 734 m, wetter and higher than at my Koolunga farm.

Thanks for the description and find, Rosemary. This article shows why it is important to take cuttings from several plants to ensure genetic diversity. Ed.



This will be me over Christmas, having a well-earned rest.

The Correas of Tasmania

A Pictorial Reference

These pictures may help you to identify some of the Correas in your garden. If you find a close similarity, why not tie a label to your plant with the name on it. I find plastic labels with string seem to survive. I gave up burying my labels as I can never find them again. I'd love to hear from you as to the best low-cost methods of labelling plants in the garden.



C. alba Low Head Lighthouse

Leaves are fairly hairy, greyish-green and ovate.



C. reflexa red George Town

Leaves were dark green and glossy on top. Flowers varied in shades of red with pale green tips.



C. reflexa 'Petal Point'

Similar to the George Town form but colours of bells varied from deep red to pale pink.

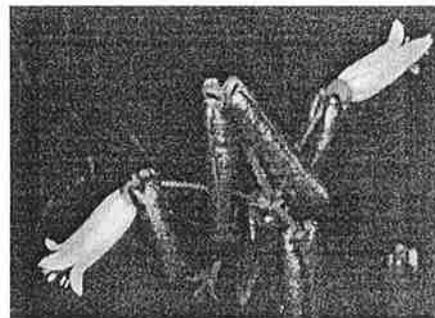


Another view of the Petal Point form



C. alba "Binalong Bay"

Anthers are darker than the Low Head form.



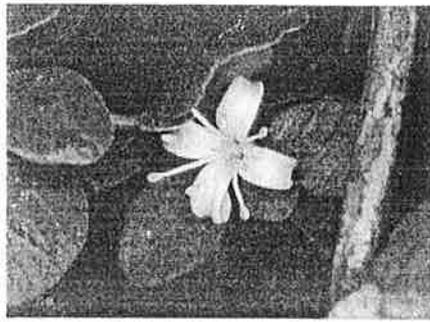
C. reflexa 'Scamander'

Leaves are very glossy, dark green and reflexed around the base of the flower.



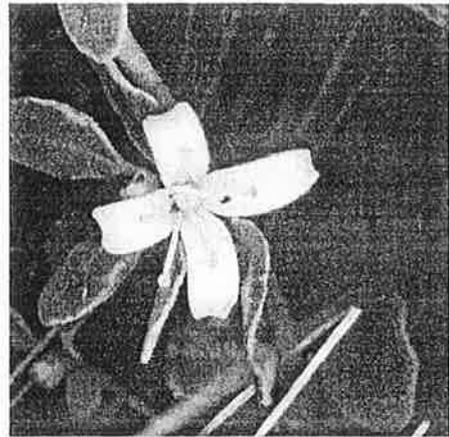
C. alba 'Four Mile Creek'

Leaves are less hairy and more glossy.



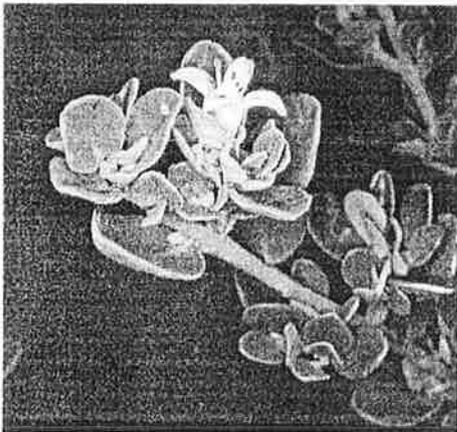
C. alba "Denison Rivulet"

This is the beautiful cascading form. Leaves are fairly glossy.



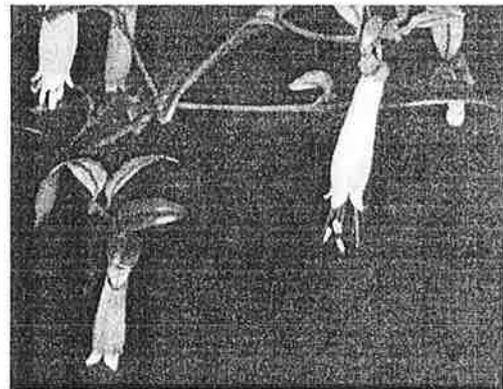
C. alba Freycinet Peninsula

Larger undulating leaves. Flowers have tan anthers.



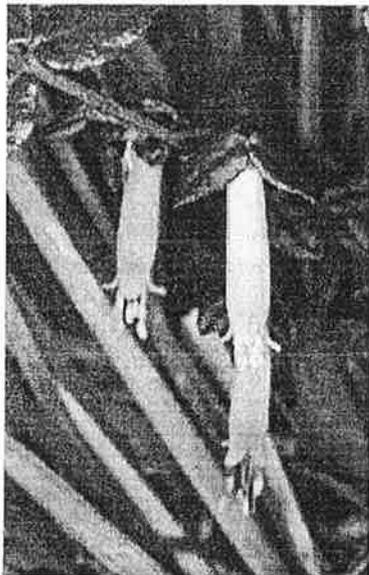
C. alba 'Bicheno'

Tightly packed foliage and small flowers with tan anthers.



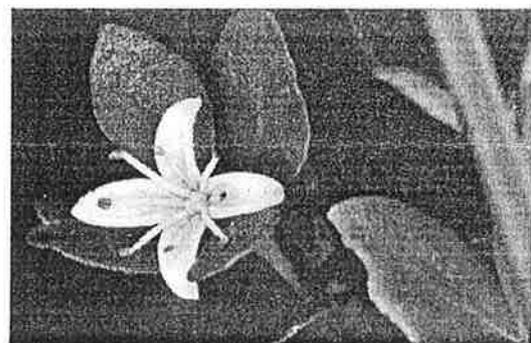
C. lawrenciana 'M. Road Junction'

The Tasmanian *C. lawrencianas* are like small trees with an upright habit, single trunk and smallish glossy dark-green leaves.



C. reflexa green 'Freycinet Peninsula'

Glossy green leaves not as reflexed as the Scamander form, yellow anthers strongly exerted out of the floral tube.



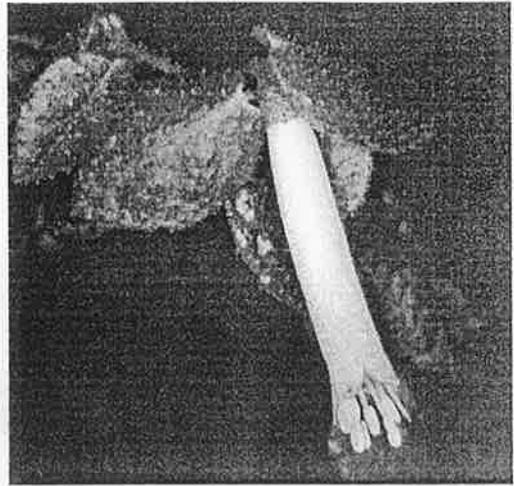
C. alba 'Swansea'

Probably the most attractive of all the *C. alba* forms seen on the trip this variety has a deep pink throat and dark anthers.



C. reflexa 'Orford'

Leaves were very rough on top and strongly reflexed around the flower.



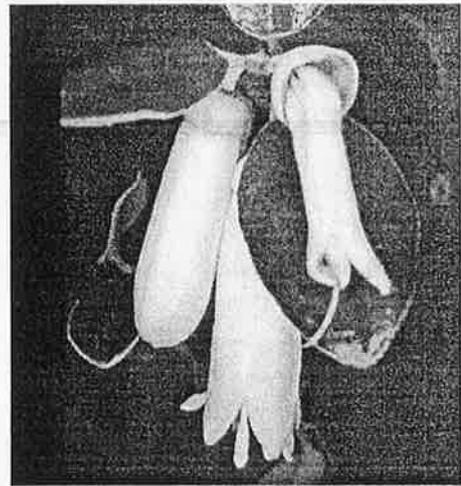
C. reflexa 'Mt Wellington'

The flower appeared to be an intergrade between *C. reflexa* and *C. lawrenciana*. Anthers are yellow and exerted. Leaves are rough on top.



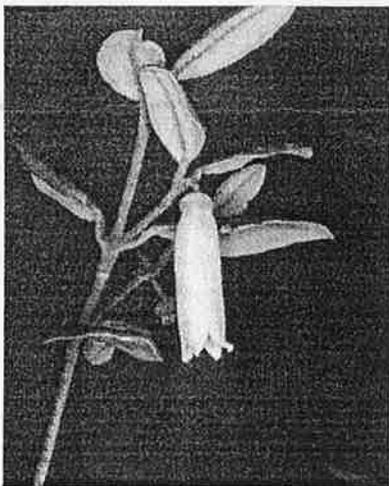
C. alba 'Dunally'

Anthers were almost red in colour. Leaves were smaller than other forms seen.



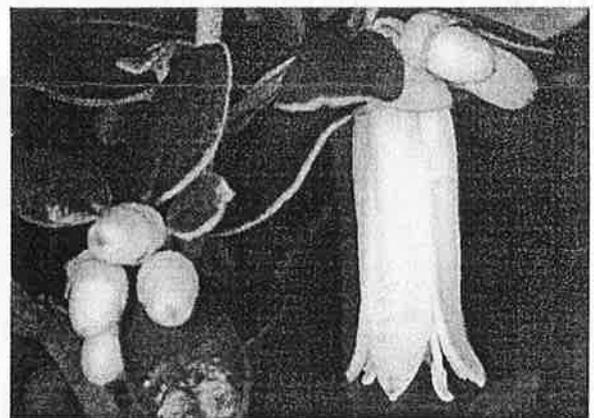
C. backhouseana 'Ocean Beach Strahan'

Glossy dark green ovate leaves and cream bells.



C. lawrenciana 'Mt Wellington'

Similar to the M road form but the trees were larger and more symmetrical. The form has great potential in landscaping.



C. backhouseana 'Trial Harbour'

Similar to other forms on the west coast.



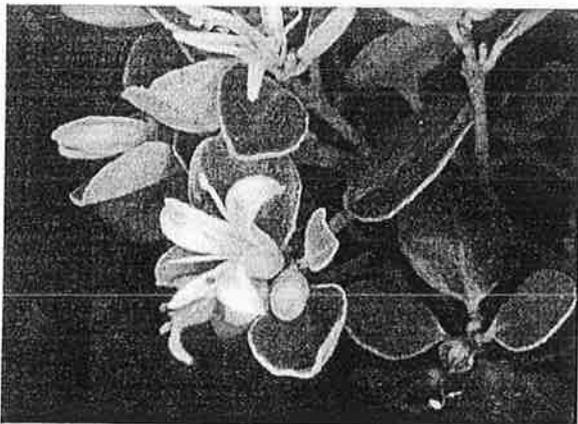
C. backhousiana 'Granville Harbour'

Some very large plants are growing here.



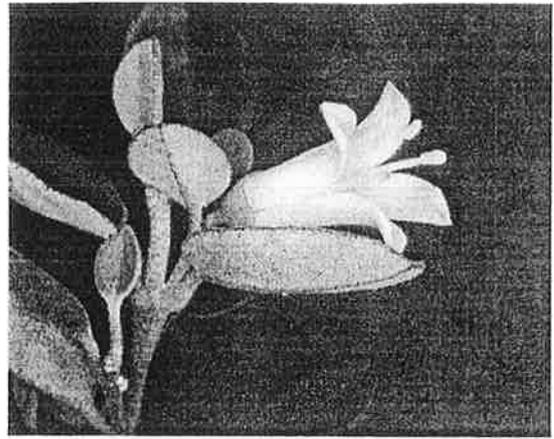
C. backhouseana 'West Point'

The large plants were covered in flowers which made a very attractive display.



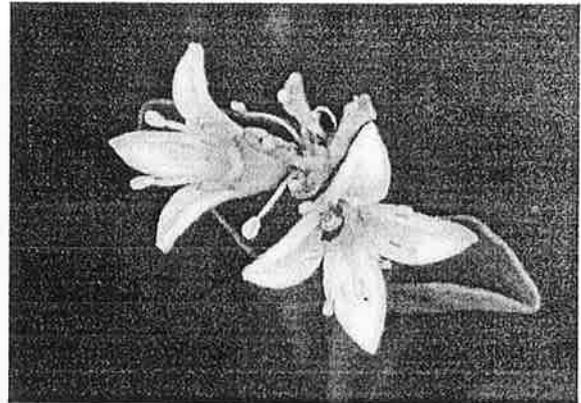
C. alba 'Stanley'

We had to climb up a cliff to get to this one.



C. backhouseana x *C. alba* 'Boat Harbour'

This is the natural intergrade between the two species growing here. The hybrid appeared to be in a stable population and needs to be given a name and registered.



C. alba 'Penguin'

Smaller flowers and folded leaves are a characteristic of this form.



C. lawrenciana 'Myrtle Hole, Latrobe'

This was a stunning form and should be grown more widely.