

5 AUG 1982

BRACHYSCOME/HELIPTERUM STUDY GROUPS.G.A.P. OLD REGION  
— LIBRARY —NEWSLETTER NO.3JULY, 1982

Dear Members,

During autumn I planted many different varieties of annuals and perennials. I found that after the autumnal rains, most seeds germinated readily. The same method as mentioned in last Newsletter was followed, coarse river sand and margarine container stood in water until seed germinated. All the containers were placed out in the open on a patio, facing North. Newspapers were thrown over young seedlings on frosty nights.

Some alpine varieties such as *Brachyscome nivalis*, *B. aculeata*, *Celmisia* sp., *Podolepis*, *Microceris*, *Craspedia* have so far failed to germinate. No special treatment was given to these seeds, except *Brachyscome aculeata*, which I experimented with by placing seed in the refrigerator for two weeks prior to sowing. This seed has still remained dormant. I have since been advised seed must be stratified, i.e., place seed in moist sterilized river sand or sand & peat, wrap in a piece of plastic and place in refrigerator at a temperature between 2°c and 4°c. for a period of six to eight weeks. The seed is then removed and sown without further treatment. Has any member had any success with this method, or in germinating any of the above species without special treatment? I hope to experiment further with alpine species in the future as I think they make a most attractive display in the garden.

Sowings March - May Mulgrave, Victoria

<u>Species</u>	<u>Days</u>	<u>Comments</u>
<i>Brachyscome ciliaris</i> var. <i>brachyglossa</i> .	11	Seed collected and sown. Good germination.
<i>Brachyscome iberidifolia</i>	6	Good germination.
" <i>readeri</i>	13	Seed collected 1981. Did not germinate last Nov. Sown again in April, germinated readily.
" <i>heterodonta</i>	13	Good germination.
<i>Helipterum albicans</i> (Alpine)	9	Germinates readily.
" <i>anthemoides</i> (Alpine Tas.)	11	2 only germinated. Grows easily from cuttings.
" <i>splendidum</i>	13	2 only germinated.
" <i>strictum</i>	6	Good germination.
<i>Helichrysum acuminatum</i> (Alpine)	11	Good germination.
" <i>bracteatum</i> var. <i>albidum</i> .	11	Good germination. Plants prone to insect attack, mine collapse after spraying.
" <i>bracteatum</i> several forms & colours.	13	Good germination.
" <i>elatum</i>	31	Poor germination. 2 only.
" <i>scorpioides</i>	11	Good germination.
" <i>semi-papposum</i> (Alpine var.)	11	Good germination.
" <i>subulifolium</i>	5	Good germination.
<i>Craspedia globosa</i>	5	Seed from Nindethana. Germinated readily.
<i>Ixodia achilleoides</i>	37	Poor germination. 1 only. Tried heat treatment but none have germinated as yet.
<i>Senecio lautus</i>	15	Fair germination.

RAIN, RAIN, GO AWAY??

Wouldn't it be nice to see a more systematic and 'scientific' approach to the propagation of our Native Flora? This has been a question prominent in my thoughts over recent years as we mastered the propagation of some of the 'easier' plants, but then faced the trauma of a distinct lack of success with the more difficult members of our flora. I determined, therefore, to approach the propagation of members of the Compositae family in a more rigorous fashion than had previously been the case.

To this end, I placed my first samples of *Brachyscome*, *Helichrysum*, *Senecio*, etc. in a propagation box, under controlled temperature conditions, with regular watering, and sown in potting medium of 3 parts coarse river sand, 1 part vermiculite, previously sterilised with boiling water. The seed that was used in this exercise included *Brachyscome readeri*, forms of *Helichrysum bracteatum*, *Helichrysum splendidum*, and *Senecio laetus*, which were kept at  $21^{\circ}\text{C} \pm 1^{\circ}\text{C}$  and watered morning and evening with tap water.

Germination was indifferent (one *Senecio*), and after hearing of the success of others with the same seed left out in the open, I decided after about 30 days to move the material from the propagation box to an outside courtyard with a north-easterly aspect. Rain followed almost immediately, and within three days seedlings of *Brachyscome*, both *Helichrysum*, and more *Senecio* had appeared.

This result, coupled with the experiences of others, indicates that autumn rains may be important in initiating germination of some species, though I raise the following questions that others may like to consider in their own attempts to propagate this and other families:-

1. Do the various additives, or naturally occurring materials in our water supplies have an inhibiting effect on germination?
2. Does the use of distilled water influence the percentage germination?
3. Are temperature fluctuations (e.g. day vs night), rather than constant temperatures, important in inducing germination?
4. If 'Autumn Rain' is the factor involved in stimulating germination, can we identify some component of this 'Rain' that is of vital importance? Is there a similar component in "Spring Rain"?

I suspect that the last of these questions holds most of the answers, but it is the one which is least likely to be answered without information being communicated within the Study Group.

Perhaps others have their own ideas and experiences relating to this and other phenomena. If so, let us know your thoughts, for we will not truly be able to say that we have mastered the cultivation of this family unless we communicate our experiences (and negative results are just as important, as it may prevent duplication of effort) and develop a consistent and successful approach to propagation.

Peter Lewis

EXTRACT FROM MINUTES OF STUDY GROUP LEADERS' MEETING LAST NOVEMBER.

At the Study Group Leaders' Meeting held at Newman College last November, there was a great deal of discussion about the value of work done by these groups, and how to record the results. Geoff Butler (Canberra) said that it was well nigh impossible to set positive guidelines for recording and reporting, but he suggested that it would be better to think up a small research project on 3-6 species with a finite aim and a finite time limit. John Colwill (W.A.W.S.) said that it was essential in these research projects that members were not told "This is the way to do this". Bearing this in mind, and after a discussion at one of our "Microscope Meetings", Judy Barker and Joy Greig volunteered to make a start with *Helipterum roseum* and *splendidum*. Other members decided on *Brachyscome iberidifolia* and *latisquamea*, but Joy has found seed of the latter species unavailable at present, so this project is delayed.

We would be very pleased to have any interstate members, who are interested, join us with this research project. The more members who volunteer to concentrate on either of the above two species, the more telling the results will be. However, if you would prefer to choose your own species, please do so, but let us know of your successes and failures.

Peter Lewis has kindly produced a simple Seed Germination Data Sheet, which we would like those members, who are interested in this project, to use for recording their experiments. This sheet will be a great help to members who are, like myself, never quite sure where to begin. Thank you Peter for your efforts.

Thank you Judy & Joy for making a start on this project. I know the results will be in good hands. Judy has also chosen 'Research Projects' as one of her Group Activities, so I hope you will all give her your support.

#### HELIPTERUM CHLOROCEPHALUM.

In response to my request for further information on this delightful little plant, Judy Barker has obliged with the following:-

"Here are a few more experiences with *H. chlorocephalum*. My seedlings were planted in various positions in the garden in mid-December (at about 4 x 2 cm.). The best plant produced flowering stems to 38 cms. and flower heads to 2 cms. in diameter. Best growth was obtained in sandy soil, not enriched with compost, in sun for most of the day, but not late afternoon sun. This batch began to flower in late January, three months after sowing, and continued to bloom until mid-April. In May these plants dried out - the foliage turning a nice shade of purple-grey.

Seedlings planted in late January, near the best position, but in compost-enriched soil, grew poorly and had very small flowers, as did seedlings planted in semi-shade with only morning sun.

Perhaps autumn sowing would yield better growth, or late winter sowing. This species seems to need a lot of sun.

*H. chlorocephalum* looks quite like *H. splendidum*. It has smaller flowers and stems, but a neater, more upright, dense habit. It is a very pretty addition to the garden, well worth growing. I don't think I could bear to disbud it. Thin stemmed flowers don't seem to dry well. Perhaps it needs more food than it received in order to thicken up the stems."

I found stems easy to wire Judy. Use fine wire No.26.

#### PLANT FOR THE MONTH OF JULY:

##### BRACHYSCOME GRAMINEA

My original plant of *Brachyscome graminea* was planted into a terracotta planter situated on the eastern side of the house, receiving early morning sun, but very little sun for the remainder of the day.

I watered the plant regularly and fed it occasionally with blood and bone. The plant grew well although its leaves were distant from each other giving the plant a sparsely leaved appearance. The stems became pendulous making it a most attractive pot specimen as it tumbled over the lip of the planter, delicately forming a lace work covering to the exterior of the planter.

I took cuttings from the plant in Spring 1981 and planted them into various areas of the garden. I have observed the following:-

- (a) Plants placed in shade or dappled light, although they grew well in the warmer months and flowered, they were sparsely covered with foliage and have died right back now that the colder cloudy days are with us. At present there are only a few branched stems now visible, they have become completely denuded of all foliage, and presume this being a consequence of the environment.

- (b) A plant placed in the corner of a paved area and in full sunlight has flourished. It is densely covered with foliage (even now in the colder months) and shows no sign of becoming leggy or sparsely covered with foliage, as did the plants in dappled light or shade. The flowers also were more abundant and larger than on the plants in shade or dappled light.

All plants were growing in humus rich soil that is hand watered well in summer, but naturally very damp in winter months.

*Brachyscome graminea* lends itself admirably as a plant for a planter or hanging basket, but regular watering is a must.

As a garden plant it is a very attractive ground cover plant to grow in full sun provided it is allowed plenty of water.

The following notes are taken from Flora of South Australia by the Late J.M. Black:-

Perennial, almost entirely without hairs, rootstock creeping, stems erect or ascending 20-70 cm. long;

Leaves narrow-oblongate, 1 nerved entire, up to 14 cm. long, including the long petiole; the upper leaves shorter, sessile, distant;

Peduncles 2-10 cm. long;

Involucral bracts 3-5 m.m. long, linear-oblong, obtuse;

Ligules 20-40, about 10 m.m. long, blue, white or pinkish;

Achenes - compressed, obovate, 2-2½ m.m. long with thick rounded margins, sometimes glandular on the somewhat concave body;

Pappus minute.

Grows in wet situations along the Murray; South-East. Flowers from August-April Victoria, New South Wales, Tasmania.

#### JOY COOK

Are there no members interstate willing to write an article on a *Brachyscome* or *Helipterum* they are growing, or about one from their own particular State or area? I had hoped I would be swamped with these articles from members. Your support in the future would be much appreciated.

#### SEED BANK:

Further to our claim for seed lost last year during postal strike, advice has now been received from the Postmaster that Claim Form must be completed by SENDER and not RECEIVER. Nindethana have advised that they will accept no responsibility for seed sent unregistered, and have offered to replace seed of *H. roseum* only without charge. We will make sure all seed purchased in future will be sent by certified mail.

Hereunder is a list of seed at present in our Seed Bank:-

*Bellida graminea*

*Brachyscome ciliaris* var. *brachyglossa*, *graminea*, *heterodonta*, *iberidifolia*  
*lineariloba*.

*Celmisia* sp.

*Craspedia* sp.

*Helichrysum baxteri*, *bracteatum* (gold, white, lime colours) *cassinianum*, *davenportii*  
*dendroideum*, *obcordatum*, *obtusifolium*, *scorpioides*, *semi-papposum*,  
*lindleyii*, *subulifolium*.

*Helipterum anthemoides*, *cotula*, *craspedioides*, *humboldtianum*, *manglesif*,  
*roseum*, *venustum*.

Microseris scapigera  
Olearia myrsinoides, Tas. sp.  
Podolepis robusta  
Senecio lautus

We wish to thank the following for their donation of seed:-

Judy Barker, John Colwill, Mrs. S. Corbett (Tas.), Bob Mylius,  
Ross McDonald, Alf & Esme Salkin.

We will be happy to accept from members any excess seed they may have.

JOY COOK

'MICROSCOPE MEETING'

Sincere thanks to Peter Lewis for arranging a suitable venue for our 'Microscope Meetings'. We have decided to meet on a Sunday afternoon during the winter months. Our next meeting will be on Sunday, 1st August, at 1.30 p.m. Scotch College (first gate Morrison Street entrance). All members welcome.

I would also like to convey my thanks to Faye, Frank and Judy for accommodating us in very comfortable surroundings in the past.

SEED SLIDE LIBRARY

As we have been experiencing difficulty in identifying some seed achenes, Frank Feltham came up with the brilliant idea of producing our own seed slide library. We hope Frank on his return from holidaying in Greece, will assist us with this worthwhile project.

WAVERLEY SHOW

The Waverley S.G.A.P. will be holding their Annual Flower Show on the 2nd and 3rd October, 1982, in the Waverley Community Centre, Miller Crescent, Mt. Waverley, between 10 a.m. - 4 p.m.

As the Daisy Study Group will be putting on its first large display, I would be very grateful to any members who could lend flowering specimens in either pots or hanging baskets for show purposes only.

We would enjoy meeting any interstate members who may be holidaying in Melbourne during that time, or any other time too.

WAVERLEY GARDEN CLUB'S COMPETITION

Congratulations to Claude Niero and Joy Greig being first and second place-getters in the Native Garden Section of the Waverley Garden Club's Competition held last March. With two such experts in the Group, maybe they could be encouraged to write some articles on landscaping, using daisies, in the future.

GROUP ACTIVITIES

I would very much like interstate members to participate more in the Group. I know it is difficult when living in a different State, but hope to encourage you by listing some of our proposed Group Activities. Articles on some of the following subjects would help to make our Newsletter more interesting, so please check the list carefully, and if any of the activities appeal to you, please let me know:-



GROUP ACTIVITIES:-

- Research Projects - Judy Barker
- Speaker or speakers for Group Meetings.
- Rare & Endangered species, growing & reporting on same, collecting seed for seed bank.
- Growing Alpine daisies in suburbia
- Seed slide library - Frank Feltham (I hope)
- Best methods of growing daisies from cuttings. Experimenting with Brachyscome leaf cuttings (basal rosette type)
- Annuals & perennials suitable for containers and hanging baskets.
- Photography
- Landscaping with daisies
- Field trips, arranging & reporting on same in Newsletter
- Writing articles on any species of the Asteraceae family
- Drawings (Collection of same for use with articles in Newsletter, displays at Flower Shows or future publication)
- Articles on the history of daisies.
- Floral Art

If members would like to include other activities, drop me a line... .

FINANCIAL STATEMENT TO 30th JUNE, 1982.

<u>Cash Receipts</u>		<u>Cash Payments</u>	
Subscriptions	42.50	Seed	81.70
Donations	97.36	Stationery	23.85
Seed sales	14.00	Stamp Duty	.12
Interest	.57	Slides	2.00
		Postage	30.15
	<hr/>		<hr/>
	\$155.11		\$137.82
		Cash balance as at 30.6.82	<hr/>
			17.29
			<hr/>
			\$155.11

Thank you Joy for keeping our books in order over the last twelve months.

SUBSCRIPTIONS:

Annual subscriptions for 1982 are now due - \$2.00

Cheques should be made payable to Brachyscome/Helipterum Study Group.

All correspondence should be addressed to: - Mrs. Maureen Schaumann  
88 Albany Drive,  
MULGRAVE. 3170

Requests for seed enclosing stamped self-addressed envelope to:-

Mrs. Joy Cook,  
2 Lotus Crescent,  
MULGRAVE. 3170

*Maureen*