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## DRYANDRA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 74

AUSTRALIAN NATIVE PLANTS SOCIETY (AUSTRALIA)



The spectacular and little grown *D. drummondii* subsp. *macrorufa*

Kevin Collins

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## DRYANDRA STUDY GROUP

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Hello and welcome to a slightly disjointed Newsletter.

My computer has been playing up and this time I was unable to join the text documents of the Newsletter to the cover and first page which are produced separately. I hope that it is all still readable and you find the material of interest.

This Newsletter may well be thought of as the “overseas members” NL, thanks to very interesting contributions from Liesbeth in The Netherlands and Tim Darrington in France. I have always been fascinated by their incredible interest in our flora and their persistence in the face of odds like freezing winters and growing very large plants of almost tree proportions in pots in glasshouses. While most of us do need to grow our plants in pots, I would like to do an article on the topic and would welcome contributions and information from members who have had success here. Another topic of interest, following Hartley Tobin’s report of severe losses following an unusually cold winter, is how dryandras survive very cold weather and are any species more reliable than others. Any takers? Margaret gives us interesting histories on the difficulties of identifying mis-named plants, *D. brownii* and *D. blechnifolia* being two cases in point. I report on the loss of my old and well established *D. nobilis*, a casualty of our very dry summer. And I couldn’t resist including a number of Kevin Collins’ very lovely pictures of several species he photographed on a recent trip. For interest, I could include in future Newsletter a couple of pictures of little known/uncommon species. Please let me know if you have any suggestions. And lastly, Margaret has updated the Index of the Newsletter and if you would like a copy, she can email it to you.

Until next time,  
Happy Dryandra growing

Tony

## Aussies in a cowshed

**(Editor's Note.** This article originally appeared in the March 2018 issue of the Victorian APS magazine *Growing Australian*. Apologies to Victorian members who have already seen it but as Liesbeth is well known to us all, I thought it would be of interest to see how she goes about raising such a variety of Aussie plants so far from their home. Many thanks to Liesbeth who readily gave me permission to use it and to Lachlan Garland, editor of *Growing Australian*, who was happy for me to reproduce it.)

It's winter for us, not my favourite time of year. Not at all. The plants are all safely tucked inside the glasshouse, which is good, but since the heater failed back in 2009 during a very cold period I'm rather nervous when frosts are forecast. It was  $-18^{\circ}\text{C}$  at night at the time, and  $-10^{\circ}\text{C}$  during the day for three days, so I lost most of my plants.

Fortunately this winter has been mild so far. It has been very wet and overcast though, and we hardly saw any sun for a long period, which isn't good to lift the spirits. The plants won't be too happy with that either, but I've learned over the years that Australian native plants can be remarkably forgiving.

Before I continue any further, it might be a good idea to introduce myself. In the early 1980s I stayed in Melbourne for a year to do part of my study – botany – at Melbourne University. I soon fell in love with the Australian flora. When husband Bert and I had our own garden in the early '90s, in the Netherlands, I started growing Mediterranean plants in pots that needed to be taken to a frost-free glasshouse in winter, hence the pots. I soon realised I might be able to grow Australian natives too at home.

What a lovely thought! Unfortunately only very few were available in the Netherlands, and since I wanted to learn more about these very special plants, I became a member of SGAP in 1997 and had access to the Vic seed list. This was the start of a great collection and passion.

In 1999 we found a property of 8,000 m<sup>2</sup> (two acres), a disused dairy farm, where Bert could fully enjoy his passion for gardening. The good thing for me was that there were two cowsheds that could be

converted into glasshouses by 'simply' removing the slabs from the roof and replacing them with glass panels.

The glasshouse attached to the house measures 9 m x 15 m, the other one is 12 m x 24 m. In the larger one I planted my own bit of 'Australian bush'. The smaller one was renovated in 2013 and holds most plants in winter.



**Our property today**

**Liesbeth**

All plants in pots are taken out in the open as soon as the risk of frosts is over, which is generally after 15 May. In autumn they are taken inside again as soon as the first frosts are forecast, which is generally some time in November. We use fan heaters running on gas to keep the temperature just above zero in winter. It's quite a challenge, but the beauty of the plants and flowers make me forget all the stressing, potting on and watering that is required to keep these Aussies happy.



As said above, it's winter now and it's been a very gloomy one. Some nice surprises are making life a lot better, however, like the very early flowering of *Acacia podalyriifolia* in my bush area. (See above). It usually doesn't flower until March/April but flowering started in October this year. I haven't got a clue why. Due to the low temperatures, the flowers last a lot longer than usual, which is a bonus. I wonder whether it'll put on a second flush of flowers in spring?



**Aussies growing and flowering in the cowshed.**

Another surprise at last are flowers on *Eucalyptus pluricaulis* ssp. *porphyrea*. The buds appeared 2½ years ago so it has been a very long wait for them to open. I'm used to slow flower development in Australian natives, but this species proves to be the absolute champion! The big cheerful blob of yellow in the glasshouse makes one forgive the plant for taking so long.



I mentioned above that Australian natives can be very forgiving. When I came back from my lovely trip to Australia in October last year, I found husband Bert had done a great job in watering my pots while I was away. Only one small cutting of

*Petrophile fastigiata* was forgotten, and looked totally dry and shrivelled up. This was very sad indeed since I was so pleased to have it growing for me. I watered it and gave it a sheltered spot and loads of TLC, hoping for the best.

I was delighted to see it put on some new growth after a month or so, and it is developing into a nice little plant again. Never throw out anything too quickly; you never know what might happen, particularly if the plant has received too little water. If it has been too wet, it's a different story. This is why I tend to keep my plants in relatively small pots so I need not worry too much when it rains for an extended period in summer when the plants are out in the open. For now, they're just sitting patiently inside, waiting for the sunnier and longer days to come. I'm looking forward to new growth, and even more flowers in spring!

While it's rather quiet with respect to the plants in the glasshouses, I have more time to focus on propagating. Many seedlings, cuttings and grafts happily grow in my 'baby room' – a spare room where I keep my small plants in a rack under fluorescent light, 12 hours a day. The propagator is in there as well, and it's good fun to check the cuttings on a daily basis, particularly the ones that I collected in Australia. It is amazing to see how well they keep for weeks when kept cool – in the fridges of the hospitable and lovely friends I stayed with – and slightly moist in plastic bags.



**Plants under fluorescent light in the "baby" room**

The weirdest thing ever I noticed a while ago when I intended to pot up some *Petrophile* cuttings that had produced roots. One of the three in the little pot had blackened and died, so I had chopped it off.

The other two had started to put on some growth, so I was delighted and looking forward to adding another magnificent Aussie to my collection. My devastating discovery was that the dead stem was the one that had produced the roots; the other two green ones had none.

I've noticed before that the cuttings that put on some new growth are not necessarily the ones that produced the roots, but this was very unusual, proving once again that plants can act very surprisingly. Plant lovers need to be rather flexible and forgiving.

Liesbeth Uijtewaal-de Vries, 2018.

Not forgetting dryandras, Liesbeth also provided the following updates.

Mid March. Discovered another bud on my *D. tenuifolia* ssp. *reptans* the other day, it had one flower last year and another one this year by the looks of it.

*D. quercifolia* is very nice in keeping the buds alive until it receives plenty of water, that's my theory anyway. There's quite a few in flower at the moment, it's one of my favourite D's! My cutting grown one hasn't flowered yet but it's doing well.

Late March. I had a lovely surprise a couple of days ago: a first flower in *Xanthorrhoea minor*! It's 9 y.o. now and grown from seed that Cherree collected from her property on Mt Clay so it is very special to me. I've germinated some *Kingia* seed recently, I'm afraid I won't see that one in flower.....lovely to have a real (baby) *Kingia* anyway! Even that might take a while since the seed only just germinated.....

It's wonderful that spring is on its way at last. The first *Isopogon* has started to flower and there's some more on their way and, of course, many more other species. Now is the time too that I'll need to spend more time in the glasshouse potting on! Get rid of the lazy fat J.

After 2 ½ years since the first buds appeared, *Eucalyptus pluricaulis* ssp. *porphyria* is now flowering. (See above).

## ***Dryandra brownii* and hybrids**

Before the publication of the volume of *The Flora of Australia* with the revision of the genus *Dryandra* by Alex George, *D. brownii* was often confused with other species that have "honeypot" flower heads, such as *D. nivea*, the various forms of *D. lindleyana*, *D. arctotidis* and *D. tortifolia*.

The first time I collected *D. brownii* in the early eighties, just south of the Stirling Range, it was not as described. I discovered later that plants in that area occur with *D. arctotidis* and that I had found hybrids, there. Later, the same day, along South Coast Hwy, near Boxwood Hill, I found the real thing. *D. arctotidis* is always prostrate with very narrow leaf lobes that form a "V" shape with the mid rib at the point. *D. tortifolia* also shares this character and the two were once in the same species – *tortifolia*. The former is widespread in the south of WA while the later is found around Badgingarra and Eneabba, north of Perth. *D. arctotidis* always has bright yellow flowers. *D. brownii* has dusky pink or rarely, pale yellow flowers. I have seen plants with flowers that were half pink and half yellow. The hybrids I collected had flowers of various colours.

The leaves of *D. brownii* have lobes that are not as sharply triangular as those of *D. nivea*. They are more obtuse and spreading. The width of the dark, bluish green leaves varies in different populations – the widest being at the eastern end of the Stirling Ranges. Plants are much-branched and bushy but they do not have the "mounding" habit of *D. nivea*. *D. brownii* does not have a lignotuber and is killed by fire.

In my previous garden, in Attadale, a Perth suburb with sandy soil, one of the first dryandras I bought was labelled *Dryandra arctotidis*. I wanted a prostrate plant for the edge of my garden. I soon realised that it was mis-labelled and later identified it as *D. brownii* because the leaves were not as described for *D. arctotidis*. I suspected that it might have been a hybrid. Later, I obtained two more plants that were definitely *D. brownii* – one with lovely leaves about 1.5 cm wide.

Unfortunately, after almost 30 years, none of the three plants ever produced a flower.

About three years ago, I bought a plant from a local nursery, for my Denmark garden, labelled *D. nivea*,

having recognised that it was more like *D. brownii* and, in August, this year, it flowered. Finally!



**Probable *brownii* hybrid in Margaret's garden, note greenish leaves**  
Margaret

I think that the source of the seeds and nursery plants is probably Nindethana Seeds because I have seen the supposed (stable) hybrid plants growing naturally in the vicinity of the property. Several years ago, Kevin Collins discovered a few plants of *D. nivea* subsp. *nivea* near the western end of North Woogenillup Road, east of Mount Barker and *D. brownii* grows at the western end of the road, in the Stirling Ranges and further south and extends eastwards to the Fitzgerald River National Park. As far as I know *D. nivea* does not occur in the Stirlings – only *D. brownii*.



**True *D. brownii*, note bluish tinge to leaves on left**  
Margaret

Much further east, north of Munglinup, I once found some plants that I was unable to distinguish between *D. nivea* subsp. *nivea* and *D. brownii* and wondered whether these, too might be stable hybrids at the eastern range of *D. brownii*. *D. nivea* subsp. *nivea* is widespread and occurs as far east as

Israelite Bay. Just to add to the confusion, plants at Mount Arid have pink flowers similar to those of *D. brownii*.



**Probable *brownii* and *nivea* garden hybrid**  
Margaret

It was a thrill to finally have flowers on my plant even though it is probably not a 'pure' *D. brownii* and is a straggly plant. *D. brownii* is a lovely foliage plant if it is able to form a neat shape, in full sun and not be crowded among other plants. It has been grown by several Study Group members, in the past and I have seen it in flower in South Australia.



**At last, true *D. brownii* plant** Tony Cavanagh

Margaret Pieroni 2017

**(Editor's note.** It was great to get this article from Margaret as it clears up a lot of mystery as to what exactly *D. brownii* was. And I think Margaret is also right about the source of many of the hybrids and mis-named plants was Nindethana Seeds Service. True *D. brownii* grows well over here (one old spreading plant of mine is over 25 years old but alas, rarely flowers.) and it is the loveliest of foliage

plants, I have included a picture of one of my younger plants.

### Notes from Members

(From Tim Darrington, Vienne, France)

After the wave of cold weather in Europe (two nights at -10°C last week : coldest nights of winter but relatively late in season). we now have barmy springlike weather. It has been about 15°C for last few days.

I have just been out watering, building a new wall at the bottom of the garden which will support the greenhouse stucture, and taking photos of *Dryandra* in flower: *D. fraseri* var. *fraseri*, *D. speciosa* subsp. *macrocarpa*, *D. nivea* subsp. *nivea* and *D. kippistiana* var. *kippistiana* in bud.

I also took a photo of a plant which I was given as a seedling in March 2017 (by the only professional Proteaceae nursery in France) a seedling described as "*Dryandra preissii*" which is growing on very nicely. However I don't believe this *Dryandra* (no. 1202 in my system) is "preissii" and I am have not been able to identify it despite distinctive leaves! Could you take a look and let me know what you think?



Tim's mystery plant

Tim Darrington

The pot is 17cm in diametre to give an idea of scale and the leaves are deeply lobed (about 10 lobes each side) and the back of the leaves (one of which I am turning round are grey-white and pubescent) and the new growing point is purplish (see photo attached)

### And some great detective work by Margaret:

It was good to hear from you, Tim.  
I am well and very busy. We had a very mild summer – unlike most of the country. It has been

hotter in spring and just now, in autumn. I chose a very hot few days to visit Perth last week and I was glad to get home.

Re the plant labelled *D. preissii* or rather, I'm assuming *Banksia acuminata*. Keith bought some plants from the Kings Park sales and gave me one of them. It took a lot of convincing to let them know it was wrong. We wondered what it could be, too – but I'm pretty sure I've now worked it out.

Several years ago, Leisbeth emailed me to say that the photo on Florabase of *D. preissii* was incorrect. I had provided quite a few photos of dryandras that they didn't have, years before and some of them were incorrect. When I checked Florabase I was horrified to discover that they had my photo of *D. blechnifolia* instead of *D. preissii*.



*D. blechnifolia* in the wild

Margaret



And for comparison, *D. preissii* in the wild Kevin Collins

I notified the herbarium and they took down the *D. blechnifolia* photo and, after a long time, put up the correct ones for *Banksia acuminata* as they call it. I can't understand how that happened as the slides were clearly labelled but I think that is the explanation for the plants being mis-labelled and

that they are, almost certainly *D. blechnifolia*.

Best wishes

Margaret

And also from Tim – *D. fraseri* var. *fraseri*

We've had an exceedingly dry autumn, hardly any rain in September and October. The first good rain was last Saturday (40 or 50 mm). Here is *Dryandra fraseri* var. *fraseri* (I think) just coming into flower, in 25cm pot. It does not look as though my *D. speciosa* subsp. *macrocarpa* will flower this winter; I did flower in March 2017, but this was late compared with the previous winter.



Tim's *D. fraseri* var. *fraseri*

Tim

And confirmation from Margaret:

Yes, I looked at your photo of *D. fraseri*. I am pretty sure it is var. *fraseri*; from the leaves. Var. *crebra* has smaller, more crowded leaves and usually has a deeper pink colouring than var. *fraseri*, but the latter can be pink, too and it is more evident when the flowers are in bud. Var. *ashbyi* is never pink, as far as I know.

And further information from Tim:

Thank you for your expert eye - just shows that one photo does not convey everything! We'll see if the *D. fraseri* flowers get less pink and more yellow as they advance, although they have hardly moved since I took the photo as it has been coldish and grey here. However I looked again at my *D. speciosa* subsp. *macrocarpa*, and it looks as if just one bud is swelling up so there'll be at least one flower this winter.

I would have very much enjoyed the *Petrophile* and *Isopogon* trip and I really ought to get round to joining that group even if I do not have the space to

grow much else apart from *Banksia* and *Dryandra* - the number of (sub-) species that I have is increasing particularly for *Dryandra* - about 40 at present. For *Banksia* I already have about 70% of species and I have probably had 80% of species at one time or another but they can be difficult to maintain for long years in a pot!

I now have the urgent construction project for a new green house for low growing plants: I already have the polycarbonate roof structure (second-hand cast-off from a neighbour it was part of his swimming pool cover but got damaged in a storm - however I have repaired it and it is sufficient for me I reckon) - as I get more and more species and plants grow on and get bigger I need the space to protect them from frost in winter. This will probably not get done until next summer due to climatic conditions and lack of time on my part.

From Hartley Tobin, Grantville, Vic.

Early this year, I got a lot of banksias and dryandras from my wholesale nursery friend and thought I was doing well, as most had "taken off" prior to us leaving for Queensland.

A number of the worst frosts (possibly on record), while we were away, made a real mess of the plants. There are a few survivors: *D. quercifolia*, *D. nivea* (?), *D. formosa* and the *D. polycephala* that I've mentioned before. It must be 20 years old.

I'll keep getting seed from our Victorian seed bank and I'll keep trying to establish more plant.

## End of an era

In Newsletter 72. I reported on my large and old *D. nobilis* which had become straggly with most of the inside branches covered in dead leaves and the only green foliage being at the ends of branches. Flowering was also suffering. I stripped off all the dead leaves and did considerable selective pruning and was rewarded with massive new growth and heavy flowering. Unfortunately, it was too good to last. Our summer this year was hot and sunny, with several days in the 40s but with little rain, just 5 mm in February and about 17 mm in March. After one of these 40+ days, most of the branches shrivelled up and died; after another, the remainder died so I no longer have my lovely *D. nobilis*.

However, I will be growing another one soon and will report later on how this one goes.

Tony Cavanagh, Mar 2018



In full flower, June, 2017 Tony Cavanagh



The beautiful red and white flower heads of *D. drummondii* subsp. *drummondii*



R.S.V.P., February 2018. Tony Cavanagh

### Some lovely pictures from Kevin Collins

Kevin has a long term interest in Australian plants, particularly of Proteaceae, and recently sent Margaret pictures from a recent trip. I thought that I would share them with you.



*D. drummondii* subsp. *drummondii*



*D. plumosa* with attendant insect



*D. preissii* flower head

## Dryandra Study Group Newsletter Index

Margaret has recently produced an updated version of the Newsletter Species Index, up to issue number 68. I have reproduced the first page below so you can see the amount of detail and information it contains. If you would like a copy, please contact Margaret by email and she will email you one. Thanks, Margaret for all your work in producing this update and for making it available to us.

### NEWSLETTER SPECIES INDEX (Covering numbers 27 to 68)

#### Coding:

Newsletter No. 27/6 Page No.  
Plain type 27/6 Named on this page  
**Bold type** 27/6 Information on or description of  
Underlined 27/6 Locality in the wild  
**(i)** 27/6(i) Illustration

*acanthopoda* 27/16.27/19(i).31/4.31/5.31.6.31/7.34/4.34/14.36/15.36/16.38/14.40/13.41/12.43/4,op4(i).45/12.48/13.59/4(i).59/5.65/9.70/17(i).72/9

*acutiloba* (fossil) **38/6(i).**

*anatona* 27/5.27/6.27/14.27/16.27/19(i).28/5.28/7.29/4.29/5.29/6.31/5.31/6.31/11.33/6.33/7.34/9.36/6.38/14.39/4.40/11.41/2.41/4,13.42/8.43/3,6,12.45/13.47/8.48/1,3,4.49/5.61/4.63/9 (i).66/4.

*arborea* **27/20.27/21.28/10.29/5.31/13.33/12.34/covers(i).34/4.35/9.36/7.38/2.38/4.39/6.42/12,17.43/3.45/12.47/5,7.48/7.62/11(i) 66/3(i)**

*arctotidis* **27/5.27/8.27/10.31/15.32/5.32/7.32/8(i).33/10.34/4.34/9.34/14.34/16.35/4.35/9.39/7.40/11.43/4,7.44/5,11.46/9,11.47/8,9,10. .60/3.62/7.3.66/6,7(i) 67/5,6.63/3,11.64/8.66/6.**

*armata* var. *armata* 27/5,6,8.29/6.31/2.33/3,5.34/9.35/9.36/15,17.41/3,4.42/3(i),10.43/4,6,7.44/10,12.45/12.48/7,21.72/10,13

*armata* var. *ignicida* **28/7.33/3.33/4.34/4.36/6.36/10.36/10.39/2.39/3.39/4.39/7.40(2,3)41/12.43/4,op4(i),9.44/5,10.45/12.46/2.47/5.51/7.54/2,4.57/12.65/9.56/2.64/3,8.66/6,7(i).67/5,6.72/9(i)**

*aurantia* **27/16.31/6.33/5.35/3.35/4.36/7.42/9.43/3.44/13.45/13.47/7.48/9,13,14.71/3,5,14(i).**

*baxteri* 27/6.27/12.29/6.33/10.34/16.36/10.38/13.41/4,13.42/op8(i).42/12.42/21.46/10.47/5,7.48/3.49/5.50/9.66/11(i).

*bipinnatifida* ssp. *bipinnatifida* **27/covers(i).27/4.28/7.28/11.31/13.33/9.34/4.34/14.35/4.35/11.36/8.38/2.38/4.42/21.44/3.45/6,12.46/9.47/5,7.48/9,13.54/6(i).62/10.63/covers,8 (i)**

*bipinnatifida* ssp. *multifida* 29/5.34/14.35/4.40/16.42/2,19.45/12.47/3.48/9.51/3.53/10.55/14.56/2,3.63/8.68/7.72/11.

*blechnifolia* **27/5.27/8.27/16.31/15.35/2.35/4.35/13.36/15.36/16.39/7.41/3.46/9.48/3,21.51/3.55/covers,6(i).62/7.63/3,5,6(i).66/6,11(i)71/14(i).**

*borealis* ssp. *borealis* **27/16.28/7.29/4.33/4.34/2.34/3.34/14.34/18(i).34/19.35/2.36/14.37/4.42/18.45/13.46/2.47/3.49/5.50/5.55/15.67/12(i).**

*borealis* ssp. *elatior* **27/2.27/3.27/14.27/16.27/19(i).28/5.28/7.31/covers(i).31/4.31/6.31/10.34/2.34/3.34/4.34/14.36/13.38/4.38/14.41/12.42/18.43/2.44/3.45/13.47/2.49/5.50/5.51/2.51/9.55/6(i).62/4,9.55/13.67/12(i)70/14.72/12.**

*brownii* 27/5.27/6.27/7.27/10.27/12.28/7.28/11.32/5.32/6.32/7.32/8(i).34/4.

*aff. brownii*      34/9.34/14.35/5.35/6.35/8.35/9.35/11.36/7.36/10.36/16.38/11.39/7.40/13.41/12.43/4.7.44/4.44/5.13.45/10.12.46/11.47/8.10.49/5.50/10.58/12.60/3.61/6.62/7.63/3.66/11(i).39/4.39/7.39/8(i).43/4.50/1

*calophylla*      27/5.27/10.29/6.33/6.34/4.34/14.34/16.35/2.35/8.35/10.35/12.35/13.

DRYANDRA STUDY GROUP

FINANCIAL STATEMENT 1/7/16 – 30/6/17

Cash at bank 1/7/16		\$ 3235.15
Income	Member's subscriptions	100.00
	Donations	1030.00
	Bank interest and fee rebates	.13
	<b>Total</b>	<u>4365.28</u>
Expenses		
	Newsletter expenses	<u>300.00</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<u>300.00</u>
	<b>Total</b>	<u>4065.28</u>
Cash at bank at 30/6/17		<u>4065.28</u>