

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants  
**EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 102**

September 2011

**THANKYOU TO ALL WHO HAVE PAID THEIR SUBSCRIPTIONS  
 YOUR RECEIPT IS ENCLOSED OR HAS BEEN FORWARDED TO YOU**

Next year's payment was due June 30<sup>th</sup> 2011 (i.e. for July 2011 - June 2012)

**SUBSCRIPTION RATE IS UNCHANGED AT \$5 PER YEAR – DUE JUNE EACH YEAR**

**THE RED DOT WILL APPEAR IN THE TOP RIGHT HAND CORNER IF YOUR SUBSCRIPTION  
 has not yet been received for 2011-2112**

I have been rather busy convening the next ANPSA Conference here in Adelaide and have been trying to fit the latest newsletter in to the spaces between commitments in that area. I was planning to include the index which Charles Farrugia sent to me earlier in the year and to which I alluded in the last newsletter; unfortunately I have run out of time to do the final checking of this and will now have it as part of the next newsletter

#### VISIT TO KEN WARNES PROPERTY

The programme for the national ANPSA conference is very tight; however, Ken Warnes has offered to have any members of the Study Group who are remaining after the conference week to visit his place at Owen, north of Adelaide on **Monday 10<sup>th</sup> October**. Although many will have left on post-conference tours and may also have returned home, there may be some who are able to remain in Adelaide for this event. Based on interest Ken will organise a visit and at a later stage provide details to those who have contacted him. I have previously contacted all registrants of Ken's offer.

If you are interested in attending please contact Ken directly on (08) 8528 6420 or via email: [kwarnes@rbe.net.au](mailto:kwarnes@rbe.net.au)

#### FROM YOUR LETTERS

**Peter Madden, Maffra, Victoria**

Can I express my thanks, through the newsletter, to the kind people who responded so promptly to help me in my search for some *Eremophila* species; especially to John Upsher for his very kind offer of *E. caperata* - and very especially to Norma Boschen for all her help with cuttings. In Norma's case it was thanks twice - after I managed to wreck the first lot by leaving them in a spot where the sun found them after I became distracted by another issue. You can only guess at the angst and wringing of hands!!

Never mind - Norma understood - and from the replacement cuttings I now have grafted plants sitting in the garden - not growing mind you, but still alive and sitting - waiting for spring (we hope). The only failure was *E. flaccida* - which behaved like a (dead) Bonsai. Oh well, it might turn up in a nursery somewhere, sometime!

Thanks again - it's a pleasure to read the newsletter and hear of everybody's successes - and occasional failures - makes me feel a lot better.

**Jan Glazebrook, Logan Village, Queensland**

Our summer has been very wet with days of showery weather which did not suit the eremophilas. and I have had a few losses. Some old, large *E. maculata* plants were among the losses. Too much shade & wet weather responsible for that! Other members have had losses as well.

I am hoping to buy replacement plants at the plant sale after the conference and to catch up with members of the Study Group around that time.

**Bernie Shanahan, Murrumburrah, NSW**

After moving to Murrumburrah (Harden-Murrumburrah) from Sydney four years ago I soon discovered that I am living in the part of town that has some severe frosts. Could have bought a better house up the hill but this one had a bare quarter acre block with a car-port, utility shed & one big shed that I use for plants. There are so many plant losses during winter/spring I plant 200-300 plants every year. Grevilleas are my main passion & I am a member of the study group.

In Sydney I was aware of a few of eremophilas such as Kalbarri Carpet, maculatas & calorhabdos. I soon became aware of many more species after visiting Stocks Nursery which is only about one kilometre up the hill from here. Ben Stocks has been very helpful with the range of eremophilas he has & also his advice. My interest with eremophilas peaked when I discovered that some re-shoot after frost damage, rarely so with grevilleas. I had a bit of success with grafting onto *Myoporum insulare* in autumn 2010 but left it a bit late this year - May. This year I hope to spend more time with propagation & less time planting. Rather than going 'bush' I spend a lot of time travelling & go to as many nurseries as possible. It didn't take long to find out that Victoria is a lot better than NSW for sourcing less common plants including eremophilas, although I haven't tried SA yet.

Some of the Nurseries that I like are: Goldfields Revegetation Nursery at Bendigo (my favourite), Lang's Native Nursery at Mildura, Native Nursery at Dimboola, Sun-Tuff Natives near Bacchus Marsh & Vaughan's Australian Plants at Curlewis, near Geelong.

**Alec & Sharon Hawtin, Irymple, Vic**

We had rain late last year and early this year and as a result lost several large eremophilas, including *E. duttonii* x *E. alternifolia* hybrid, several variations of *E. maculata*, *E. purpurascens*, a grafted *E. latrobei*, *E. 'Murchison River'*, and *E. lucida*.

Alec sent two pictures of their back yard – a total lake, with ironically a system of irrigation pipes exposed. (I can attest to the level of flood waters in this area, since Myrnie & I visited Mildura some time after the rains and the roads to the west of the main highway south from Mildura through Irymple were closed to traffic, especially near the railway line. The main road on the eastern boundary of the Mildura airport was restricted to one lane and controlled by portable lights. Colin)

The Up side of this is that I potted up about 200 seedling eremophilas. There could be some interesting crossings amongst them – just wish that we had somewhere to grow them on!!

**Meredith Farley, Kerang, Victoria**

I look forward to reading the newsletters when they arrive. After reading in your newsletter the various climatic extremes we've been enduring across the country and the effects on eremophilas; thought I'd contribute a line or two:

We're on a farm in north-west Victoria that has the nice heavy grey, cracking clays of the floodplain country.

Our farm and house yard were flooded in the recent floods that came through in January and covered the farm for 2-3 months with up to a metre of water. While the floodwaters were coming into the house-yard an excavator was at work trying to top up our little check banks to put some sort of levee around the house-yard so we could stop the water from rising. The levee did stop the water from continuing to run into the house-yard but not before it went right up to the house. We then started the long process of pumping water back out of the yard and over the levee banks back into the floodwater that covered the rest of the farm. While all the floods were on, the weather was ironically, generally sunny summer weather. Pretty much all the floodwaters we got was as a result of rainfall in the catchment areas and elsewhere, not rainfall here - so I think I'll still keep planting eremophilas!

I was interested to see how the eremophilas fared. We unfortunately don't have any of the rarer species here, but there's still quite a variety in the garden and yard area. I had the prostrate *E. biserrata* growing out the west side of our house where I'd planted a number of plants to replace an old lawn area. They are growing on flat ground and were covered with the floodwaters (probably only a few centimetres) for approx. 3-4 days. As a result of pumping off the water this area was the first spot the water receded from. I watered off the remaining clay silt they had on their leaves and they have been fine.

There were a number of losses throughout the garden due to floodwaters sitting for 1-2 weeks across the yard. *Eremophila (calorhabdos x denticulata)* died quite some time later (approx. 4-6 weeks). Not surprisingly those plants (all young, from 1-2 yrs) on the more raised beds (to 30cm high) which range from clay to clay loam fared

better because they didn't have water covering their roots the whole time; also the much larger eremophilas around the edge of the yard that are growing on the flat ground amongst other established trees and shrubs all survived. These included various forms of *E. maculata*, *E. glabra*, *E. laanii* (pink), *E. 'Big Poly'*, *E. 'Summertime Blue'* & *E. divaricata*. Unfortunately *E. abietina* which was on a mound also died while forms of *E. lucida* & *E. viscida* next to it survived. I had done some replacement planting in some of our farm tree belts over the past year which included a number of *E. divaricata*, *E. polyclada* and some *E. laanii* (pink), all of which either grow on floodplains or along creek beds according to the eremophila book. All of these young plants sat under water for quite some time (not sure how long) so I was not expecting any to survive. I was quite surprised to see that almost all of the *E. divaricata* which had been the smallest of all the varieties survived. Apart from being indigenous to here, I wonder if the fact that *E. divaricata* will grow quite well in shaded conditions here too may help where as *E. polyclada* seems to need the sun more.

I haven't used any grafted eremophilas here because up until now our lower rainfall (in a good year 230-250mm) and provided I raise the beds for the more fussy ones; there are so many that will do fine in the clay-clay loam soil here including *E. (calorhabdos x splendens)* (and its parents), *E. drummondii*, *E. nivea*, *E. rugosa*, *E. macdonnellii*, *E. ovata*, *E. 'Yanna Rd'* *E. (glabra x georgei)*, *E. densifolia*, *E. decussata*, *E. barbata*, *E. chamaephila* etc. I think living in north-west Victoria with our more "Mediterranean" climate, it's about time we have some advantages (not having to have so many eremophilas grafted) over those gardeners who are either coast dwellers or from higher rainfall areas!

On another note - can you tell me where I can get *E. punicea* and *E. glandulifera* from? I know these might have to be grafted forms. I wish to plant either one of these in some old farm ceramic agriculture pipe so was after one of the smaller eremophilas with silver-grey foliage, bright pink flowers and frost tolerant.

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**Barbara Daly, Cook, ACT**

'Tis real cold here and wind and rain!

But: *E. 'Yanna Road'* continues to produce its lovely pink flowers among its grey-green foliage. *E. maculata* x *E. racemosa*, laden with buds awaits warmer days while *E. maculata*, sheltered below *Grevillea 'Mason's Hybrid'* is happily bearing rich red flowers along with another with pinker flowers.

**Jan Hall, Yarrawonga (Vic)**

Thanks for a very informative and interesting Newsletter (No.101) Members comments such as these help us to compare experiences and therefore find species to suit our individual areas or how to prevent problems with those very desirable species that general gardeners would love to have.

**Webbing Caterpillar** I have never seen so much of this pest which often attacks small Myrtaceae but not on eremophilas. The wet, humid spring/summer was ideal for it to infest all of my *E. maculata* plants (about 20 plants of different selections). We pruned them back, sprayed some and all now look good. The webbing is still found in some small melaleucas not sprayed. I usually strip them out with a gloved hand and prune back but missed some. It was also in *E. racemosa* but not in all others.

It is most unusual for us to have a cooler, wetter and very humid summer (only 2 days over 40°C). Other plants grew vigorously following slow growth during the drought. This produced overcrowding and shading of some eremophilas with consequent fungal problems and leaf drop. *Eremophila densifolia* with purple leaves was most resentful but is recovering after letting in the light. These are growing on a built-up mound. The upright *E. densifolia* subsp. *pubiflora* died of wet feet on our heavy, red clay on the flat.

Most of my hairy-leaf, silver-foliage plants are kept in pots under an open roof and are fine but one, *E. mackinlayi* subsp. *spatulata*, died while other silver-foliage plants recovered during our (thankfully) dry sunny autumn. *Eremophila macmillaniana* actually put on growth after 'sitting' for about 5 years.

However, to best cope with our conditions of very wet, clay soil we really need grafted plants on *Myoporum* root stock. We did lose a number of cutting-grown plants growing in soil modified with gypsum, sand and compost but it is still flat and ultimately poorly drained.

Overall we are enjoying the vigorous growth on most, making pruning a bigger task instead of selective watering. Fortunately we had built mounds for many and this proved worthwhile. So the observation/learning process goes on!

Some Species Mentioned in the Newsletters

E. laanii - suffered during the drought and is now covered in new foliage.

E. adenotricha - not worth while growing here.

E. warnesii - this one is destined to stay in its' pot. I also find that the hairy species (and some others) are better grown on in at least a 20cm pot to become a bit 'woody' while getting full hot sun and under the roof or eaves to keep the foliage dry.

E. fasciata - as above but have planted out the tub plant and think it will need a cover after reading the newsletter. (It has been successful under cover.)

E. hygrophana - I had 2 tub plants under the eaves for years in the old garden. This one is now planted out in a sandy, well-drained mound. It has some 'winter-blues' each year including tip damage due to frost then recovers. The humid summer caused die-back too. It recovers but must be pruned at the right moment to avoid bare stems.

E. mackinlayi - In the same bed but died in late spring. It had been grown on. Probably also has to be covered during wet periods.

E. muelleriana - Tub plant and all is well under cover apart from a little tip damage and leaf drop. Still learning to manage the pruning.

E. acrida - Seems logical that it would like summer moisture and dry winter like other subspecies from Central Australia. It is also destined to stay under cover.

E. elderi - Has done quite well on the North-facing wall, [broad leaf form]. Maree has given me the Ormiston Gorge form we saw last year. Something will have to make way on that north-facing wall!

E. glandulifera - Just have to mention this as it is probably my most spectacular plant. In winter too it suffers very little damage from the weather, growing on the sandy, open mound. All of these are grafted.

E. latrobei - Some thrive, some don't. Silver foliage pink flower form from NSW and QLD border, is, so far, the most colourful. It suffers from frost below -2<sup>0</sup>C but recovers. Others I will grow on a bit before planting out.

**QUEENSLAND GROUP**

On 14 June a meeting of the group was held at the home of Robert & Barbara Reid in Warwick. Twenty two members attended, many coming from as far away as Roma, Brisbane. Toowoomba and Woodenbong.

The group had been given a cheque for \$50, from SGAP Qld Region, to assist them with the presentation of the Study Group's display at the recent Annual Flower Day. Since there was no need to open a bank account at the moment, they decided to forward the cheque to Colin Jennings to add to the funds held by the ASGAP (APS) Eremophila Study Group. In return they asked if some plants could be collected by members attending the conference which could be used at a future raffle of the Queensland group.

The topic for the meeting was "Effects of a Wet Summer on Eremophilas". This drew lengthy discussion as many tales of woe unfolded. Some members suffered more losses than others, but this is to be expected with members coming from such varied soil and weather patterns. However, one problem was common to all - the loss of almost all prostrate eremophilas, particularly the prostrate *E. glabra* forms (even the low growing glabras).

A good selection of eremophilas was provided for the raffle and after a walk a round the extensive and interesting garden, Darrell Fletcher took us on a tour of a conservation area which Warwick SGAP had acquired to resurrect and preserve. Although there were no eremophilas in this dry scrub area it was still interesting to this diverse group of plant enthusiasts.

The final meeting of the study group for 2011 will be at the home of Ken & Jan Mathison, 5 Strathdarr Drive, Toowoomba on 15<sup>th</sup> October.

## EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP

## SYDNEY BRANCH

Charles commented that after the recent week of heavy rainfall the only eremophilas affected were the ones that normally do not like these conditions – *E. fasciata*, *E. hygrophana* and *E. warnesii*. The rest, especially *E. forrestii*, *E. glabra* ssp. *tomentosa* and the rest of the grey leaf *E. glabra* species responded to the wet conditions very positively.

The following eremophilas in Charles' garden were badly affected with scale: *E. youngii*, *E. youngii* ssp. *lepidota*, *E. maculata* 'Blue Thunder', *E. laanii*, *E. tetraptera*, *E. purpurascens*, *E. alternifolia* and *E. glabra* green leaf form. Charles is using pest oil to control this problem.

Due to losing most of his grafted tube stock during the hot summer months over the last two years Charles is now grafting *Eremophila* species through the autumn and winter months. This way the grafted plants can be hardened through spring and they will be (hopefully) ready to handle the hot summer months. So far this autumn/winter period the following species have been successfully grafted: *E. spectabilis*, *E. spectabilis* ssp. *brevis*, *E. (ionantha x caerulea)*, *E. willsii*, *E. muelleriana*, *E. fasciata*, and *E. hygrophana*. Two of each of these species has been grafted, one on *Myoporum* sp. and one on *E. denticulata* ssp. *trisulcata* rootstock. So far the losses have been the two *E. warnesii* and one *E. willsii* grafts. These grafts are placed in a foam box, covered over with two plastic bags and placed in full sun during the day. At sunset and also on cloudy days they are placed against a western side brick wall.

To a question by Gordon in regards to how the *E. denticulata* ssp. *trisulcata* rootstock was progressing, Andrew and Charles said that though they are using both *Myoporum* and *E. denticulata* ssp. *trisulcata* as rootstock, they prefer to graft onto the *E. denticulata* ssp. *trisulcata* because there is rarely any problem with side shoots. Andrew said that some species that were unsuccessfully grafted on *Myoporum* rootstock were quite successful on *E. denticulata* ssp. *trisulcata* rootstock.

Charles Farrugia

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