ISSN-0811-529X

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants
EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 106

June 2013

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

Next year's payment will be due June 30th 2013 (i.e. for July 2013 - June 2014)

SUBSCRIPTION RATE IS UNCHANGED AT $5 PER YEAR – DUE 30 JUNE EACH YEAR

Thank you to all who have paid their subscription since the last newsletter was posted; your receipts are enclosed. Renewal of subscriptions is due at the end of this month for the 2013/2014 year.

My activities are still restricted. The cortisone injection into the disk has had some effect, however; there is still quite a way to go before I will be able to do much walking. Next stage will be exercises designed for the immediate problem as well as hydrotherapy to encourage the non-used muscles to redevelop their tone.

It has been a rather quiet time re eremophila-related activities; I have received only a few letters. I appreciate the articles written by Ken Warnes, who has replied to several items raised in previous newsletters. Ken Warnes & Bev Rice have been discussing the possibility of holding a get-together, for those who would be interested, at their properties north of Adelaide. After suggesting a number of dates, all of which clashed with another event already slotted into the date chosen, they have come up with 14-15 September. Alas, this too clashes with an important date, Election Day. Fortunately we can all vote away from our electorates.

It is some time since we had such a gathering in SA, so don't miss out on this opportunity to meet once again.

ONGOING EXPERIMENTS AND PROBLEMS 2012/13

AS an experiment I deliberately let the ride-on mower "shave" some of the larger ground cover plants in my plantation, assuming that strong re-growth would occur. How wrong was I! The resultant bare growth is still just that, many months later. I have long advocated the use of species/cultivars such as *E. biserrata*, *E. serpens*, 'Magic Carpet', and selected *E. glabra* forms to cover bare areas, median strips etc. and this experiment was to see if they could be rejuvenated over time. On the strength of this trial I would say not. This doesn't mean that plants can't be pruned to force new growth, but low mowing to remove annual weeds was not a success and will not be done again.

This year I intend to over-spray with grass specific herbicides and monitor the results. Such chemicals are not available in garden packs, but they are considered safe to use and so pose no risks. I'm not gung-ho with these chemicals, it's just that as a farmer I have access to chemicals that the general public can't purchase.

Wingless grass-hoppers created their annual extended havoc despite being over-sprayed on two occasions with a registered pesticide, alpha-cypermethrin. Some control was achieved but as they attack during grain harvest my timing was a bit out. Their attacks are widespread but they particularly like hairy leaved *E. glabra* forms, *E. splendens* and its hybrids, *E. nivea* hybrids although *E. nivea* itself was not too bad, *E.* aff. *gibbosa* ex Tallering Peak and *Myoporum bateae* and *M. turbinatum*. On their favourites they don't leave a leaf and have actually killed numerous large plants. They have limited mobility which is the only thing that can be said in their favour.

Numerous mature plants were lost over the very long, dry summer and termites were found in the stumps of many of them. I didn't record which were grafted and which were on their own roots. The losses lead me to wonder how long some species live. While I have *E. maculata* over 50 years old, others we suspect have very limited life spans. Perhaps a large number only live a few years, taking advantage when conditions are good and so we can't expect them to hold well in cultivation. Just another area of study!

I am watching with interest and some concern a grafted plant of *E. prostrata*. This grafts easily and this particular plant appeared to be quite normal until recently when it has taken on many characteristics of the *M. acuminatum* form I used as the stock. I pruned off the most noticeable aberrant shoots but they are back and the whole plant is now quite bushy. Buds appear small and slow to open. Do I have another Chimera? The other chimeras involving interaction between the *M. insulare* stock and *E. hygrophana and E. warnesii* came from the actual union but this one appeared to be perfectly normal until recently and is certainly not from the union.

Ken Warnes

ACRA NOMINATIONS

I was recently contacted by Paul Carmen, Registrar of ACRA, in relation to some of my hybrids which I had proposed as registered cultivars. This was not for any personal gain, it was purely to try and make the name "stick".

As a result the following are proposed for registration at this stage.

'Piccaninny Dawn'

This is a seedling from my property which germinated under *E. oldfieldii* subsp. *angustifolia* (grown from seed) and is thought to be pollinated by *E. oppositifolia* subsp. *oppositifolia*; a cream form from Waikerie. It is a rounded, dense multi-trunked large shrub with cream calyx and pink flower, resembling the first light of a new day, hence the name. A wonderful feature or screening plant.

'Nullarbor Nymph'

A seedling from my property which germinated near a grey leaved form of *E. decussata* and is thought to be pollinated by *E. parvifolia* from the Head of the Bight. It is a low, dense, spreading shrub with purple flowers in spring. Both parents are from the Nullarbor and SA members at least will know the story of the Nullarbor Nymph. A handy filler for borders and rockeries.

'Summertime Blue'

It's been around for years; is a very adaptable plant which was initially introduced by Tony Clark of "Nellies Nursery" from material collected near Lake Walla Walla in NW Victoria. The name has never been registered, now seems an appropriate time. The presumed parents are *E. polyclada* and *E. divaricata.*

'Magic Carpet'

A seedling from Tom Loffler at Waikerie. This is from the original small-leaved *E. biserrata,* the pollen presumed to come from a low growing, red-flowered form of *E. glabra.* It is very well illustrated by Boschen, Goods and Wait in their book. A dense ground-cover with a difference.

'Big Polly'

A hybrid between *E. bignoniiflora* and *E. polyclada*, again from Lake Walla Walla. I have referred this one on to the Victorian members who were responsible for its introduction. The fact that there are various collections from Victoria and Queensland was considered manageable, because the Queensland one is not in general cultivation.

The smoky blue variant which we call the "3 Ways" because it may have some *E. divaricata* in it is currently in the 'too hard' basket but may be added at a later date. Any information on this one would be appreciated because it is an outstanding plant, lower and denser than 'Big Polly', with glorious flowers in summer.

Several others were discussed, but I chose to stay with the tried and true for the initial listings. 'Yana Road', (presumed *E. gilesii* x *E. latrobei*), the "Rainbow" group, (*E. prostrata, E. willsii, E. goodwinii* hybrids, *E. nivea* hybrids, in particular *E.* (*nivea* x *christophorii*), *E.* (*rotundifolia* x *drummondii*) and numerous field collections of some merit were listed and Paul was intending to follow up with Russell Wait re some of his plants such as 'Beryl's Blue', 'Beryl's Gem' and 'Crazy Mac'.

These Registrations are officially under the cover of The Eremophila Study Group.

Ken Warnes

COMMON NAMES AND THOSE PESKY EMUS

THE issue with common names is regularly raised and I don't believe there is an answer, easy or otherwise. You can't beat human nature and that's what we are up against. It is the reason why, through the Study Group, we can try to address the continuing rise of the hybrids in cultivation, but ACRA is simply not able to cope with the 80 and rising number of hybrids that are on the list some of us are attempting to keep. We will never beat the nurseries' inventiveness or use of grower's pet names and we will never control the miss-application of even correctly registered or listed names. Good luck with your efforts but I don't believe it can be done.

Some examples, *E. maculata* 'Wendy' seems to be one often discussed. As far as I know it was tacked onto a red-flowered maculata by Tony Clark who collected it from Wendy Pollard's garden in Mannum. It's just a red-flowered maculata of which you can find millions of similar plants in the field. Or *E. glabra* 'Brice', it's from a plastic nursery label because the cuts were collected from the garden of Bev Rice and is this the plant sold under the 'Lime Gold' nursery label in Victoria? Looks the same but is it?

Where a name is being used and is inappropriate I believe it is up to every one of us to try and correct the situation. In SA the seedling *E. maculata* which is a cross between *E. maculata* subsp. *maculata* and subsp. *brevifolia* is sold as *E. maculata* compact. It's totally incorrect, firstly because there are many compact maculata

forms and there is also a chance that people might think that the true *E. compacta* is involved. Totally untrue! Good friends use the label but I am unrelenting in my opposition, so must you all in these situations.

On the subject of emus, inhibitors and germination problems. Firstly it's another example of common names not always being for the common good. The term "emu bush" appears to have been widely used for *E. longifolia* only, but has been adopted much more generally than was the original intent and usage. The subject has been discussed in previous Newsletters and I have no reason to change my thoughts. The need to pass through an emu has been debunked on many occasions, the fact that they germinate after ingestion proves ONLY that the seeds can survive passage through an emu. It may hasten breakdown of physical or chemical barriers, we just don't know. It wouldn't help the plant much if it germinated in the middle of a drought just because an emu had eaten the fruit. Keep in mind that the woody fruit may have spent time in the gizzard; that would be the equivalent of spending time in a rock tumbler in an acid solution. It's all in previous N/L's.

Bob Chinnock in his monograph, EREMOPHILA AND RELATED GENERA discusses the presence of chemical inhibitors. P.56. Again it's dangerous to generalise across the genus, but they are a scientifically established fact with some species.

Re coloured calyx and seed dispersal. Again it's been covered previously but I said at the time that nothing in nature happens by accident. Perhaps some work needs to be done on the fleshy outer layers of the drupe to ascertain its palatability, digestibility and nutritional value. After all, that's why the emu eats the fruit; the distribution and possible aid to germination are incidental to the exercise. There's often well developed seed within the drupe when it is still green and fleshy and the calyx is brightly coloured. Once again our lack of knowledge prevents us from knowing at what stage the seed is viable within the drupe and at what stage an inhibitor, if there is one, develops.

It's great that so many members are still actively probing and questioning, it's the only way our knowledge will grow.

Ken Warnes

FROM YOUR LETTERS

Bev Rice, Dutton, SA

RABBITS! - Pesky little brutes – if they don't eat the leaves they attack the roots in summer. I have to leave guards around all my plants until they are several years old and have developed into a substantial bush. The guards do look unsightly but I have no option.

I have observed that the rabbits do not like *Eremophila drummondii* (dwarf form) and this is one that a guard is not required to protect.

It would be useful to be able to make a list of eremophilas that rabbits do not eat.

I had thought that prostrate *E. glabra* was not in their diet, but have several old *E. glabra* ground covers that never get touched but I planted several new ones out two years ago and they are continually eaten off. *Eremophila biserrata*, *E. subteretifolia* and *E. barbata* all appear to be off the menu.
Kangaroos decimate *E. brevifolia* and *E. splendens* so permanent guards are required around both. The grey dwarf form of *E. glabra* with a yellow-lime flower (*E. glabra* 'Lime Glow') is one which is definitely breakfast, lunch and dinner as both 'roos and rabbits appear to love it.
Who else has observed any particular eremophilas that are not eaten by rabbits?

David Oldfield, Maldon, Victoria

I'm Sue Oldfield's non green-fingered husband. I was bitten by the photo bug long ago at school and in my retirement I potter around with digital photos. We moved from Rockbank to Maldon two years ago and before we left Rockbank I had taken most of Sue's eremophilas to see how I could use the amazing layering techniques in the latest version of Photoshop to increase the depth of field.

Recently I have been looking at the possibility of taking UV photographs of wildflowers and wondered if many people had tried this in the past. I saw one of your papers which mentioned UV photography on the Australian Native Plants website (whatever they are called this week). There is a fantastic blog (uvir.eu) which I found via Wikipedia but the author is based in Germany. Converting cameras and all that sort of stuff can be done by Camera Clinic in Melbourne but I wondered if the results of UV shots of natives really are striking and worth the effort. Has there been any work on the vision systems of any pollinators of natives?

John Upsher, Maribyrnong, Victoria

I have started on Facebook, a section called 'Eremophila Growers'. At present it has few members and gets little attention because people don't know it is there. As I see it, this is a quick and easy way that the Study Group can deliver urgent messages like identification queries, pest problems or requests for cutting material or availability of certain species/ssp/whatever and dialogue on current topics. If the 'Eremophila Growers' Site were to gain momentum it could avoid the Study Group having to set up another place on the web for those purposes. Several ASGAP groups have their own sites in Face book and there is a more open site 'Australian Native Plant Enthusiasts' so there is potential for immediate access to many growers, which could result in more joining their local ASGAP group too.

Ian Tranter, Queanbeyan, New South Wales

As Phil Hempel mentioned in the latest newsletter, I have taken his table of the common names of Eremophila species and added in the forms and cultivars that I could find from various books, the Study Group newsletters and lists that are available on the web. Phil has included it as a PDF on his great website http://home.vicnet.net.au/~eremoph/ and has now updated it with the latest changes. The table was created in excel and I am happy to send out a copy in that format to any member who is interested. It may be easier to manipulate and analyze in that form. My email is ian.tranter@exemail.com.au .

I suspect that multiple names may occasionally refer to the same forms and I would appreciate any advice that could clarify such duplications (or correct any mistakes). If members have additional nursery lists that are not on the web, I am happy to add these into the table. I should say that I am not personally familiar with the vast majority of forms. I have just been trying to get my head around the range that might be out there and available for those interested. The second sheet in the excel document gives the sources I have used and the web-links where available. These are:

Suppliers and Sources:

1, ANPS CANBERRA ,
2, APS SA – Autumn 2012 sale list,
3, APS SA spring 2012 (where new from 2), http://www.australianplantssa.asn.au/images/pdf/Plant_Sale_List.pdf
4, Arid Smart (Arid Lands nature Park), http://www.aalbg.sa.gov.au/assets/files/AridSmart%20plant%20range.pdf
5, Australia's Eremophilas,
6, Eremophila and Allied Genera,
7, Eremophila Study Group - Melbourne and Districts, http://home.vicnet.net.au/~eremoph/
8, Eremophila Study Group Newsletters,
9, Goldfields Revegetation 2005 + website 2012, http://www.goldfieldsrevegetation.com.au/PlantCatalogue.asp
10, Goodwinii Eremophila Nursery? No data yet.,
11, Grandswin Eremophila nursery, http://grandswin.com.au/index.html
12, Langs 2010,
13, Mallee native plants? No data yet.,
14, Mole Station Native Plant Nursery, http://www.molerivernursery.com/plantdb/plant_database.asp
15, Natural plantscapes, http://www.naturalplantscape.com.au/native%20nursery%20landscaping%20eremophila.html
16, Plants of Inland Australia,
17, SA state flora nursery, http://www.environment.sa.gov.au/Plants_Animals/State_Flora/Catalogue
18, Sydney wild flower nursery, http://www.sydneywildflowernursery.com.au/plants/stock-list.html
19, Wildtech nursery , http://www.wildtechnursery.com.au/
20, Zanthorrea ? No data yet.,
21, ANBG plant images (only cultivars included), http://www.anbg.gov.au/photo/apii/genus/Eremophila
22, Eremophilas of WA,
23, Australian Plant Name Index , http://www.anbg.gov.au/cgi-bin/apni
24, APS SA database list, http://www.users.on.net/~rdahms/APSquery_2012.2_Plant_List.html

EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP – SYDNEY

The next meeting of the Sydney group will be held on Saturday 6th July from 10 – noon at the home of Tamara & Ian Cox (5 Ivy Place Kenthurst.) Besides looking around their garden it is intended to discuss the relationship between scale & bees and also to talk about the growing of a selected species via cuttings