

Association Native Plants Society (Australia) (ANPSA)

Eremophila Study Group Newsletter No. 111

AUGUST 2015

SUBSCRIPTION NOTICES

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LETTER FROM THE EDITOR

Welcome to the Eremophila Study Group newsletter for August 2015.

As this is my first newsletter as your new Study Group Leader I thought I would tell you all a little about myself, and then about plans for the Group.

My husband (Tom Jordan) and I moved to Canberra in 1979, where I was sent for my first job after finishing my biology degree. We immediately joined the then Society for Growing Australian Plants (Canberra Region) Inc and its propagation group. When we moved onto 2 acres at Queanbeyan in 1985 we allowed the Society to instal an igloo-style greenhouse on our property. It was around this time we bought our first Eremophila, the very first being *E. maculata* Wendy, planted in clay soil churned up by the earthworks for the sewer line in our subdivision. This plant is still growing in our garden, some 30 years later.

At the time few *Eremophila* were available commercially and the received wisdom was that they wouldn't survive in the frost – I am pleased to say that we have proved them wrong! We joined the Eremophila Study Group in the late 1980s after a brief flirtation with the Dryandra Study Group (a genus that definitely doesn't like it in Canberra).

At that time we bought our Eremophilas by mail order from Lang's Nursery at Mildura, and another grower in Victoria. These were shipped by rail and after a particularly perilous event where our plants were stuck for several days in January heat in Melbourne due to a railway strike, we learned only to order plants in the cooler months.

Of course we introduced our new favourites to the SGAP Canberra propagation group and over time showed that many species are frost hardy and grow just fine in our harsh climate (if a little slowly). The propagation group now has records for over 10,700 cuttings from 155 Eremophila species, and sells up to 96 species and varieties through ANPS Canberra's biannual sale. The latest Australian Plants for Canberra Region Gardens lists many of these.

So, now to the Study Group. Firstly, I would like to thank **Colin Jennings** for ably leading the Group for many years, most recently in very trying circumstances. Colin took over the Study Group from Geoff Needham in 1989 and has delivered sterling service since that time. We wish him the best with his health and thank him for those years of service.

Next, thank you to **Ken Warnes, Bev Rice** and **Ian Tranter** for assistance and support during the recent

changeover. Ken and Bev issued two newsletters and checked and updated the membership database; Ian has helped to add email addresses on to this database so Newsletters can be distributed by email, as far as possible. He has also agreed to be a signatory to the Study Group bank account, which, thanks to Colin, is very healthy.

Many things will stay the same under the “new management”.

1. Eremophila Study Group members must be members of a local chapter of the Australian Native Plants Society (Australia). This policy is common to all Study Groups sponsored by ANPSA.
2. Contributions from members, on Eremophila-relevant topics, will be warmly received. Contributors are assumed to grant permission for their words to be published, unless they advise otherwise at the time. So please continue to send your contributions for the Newsletter – to my email (below).
3. As Leader I must publish Newsletters at least twice each year. I won't commit to more than that, but I will try to exceed the minimum requirement. That, of course also depends on how prolific the Group members are in their contributions!
4. Subscription fees remain at \$5 p.a. for the moment – but don't send money til notified, I am still sorting out banking.

And yes of course there is to be some new stuff. Thanks to those of you who suggested some of these during Bev and Ken's recent tenure:

1. The Newsletter will be published in colour and emailed as a PDF to as many members as possible. This saves on postage and printing costs – but if you don't have email,

never fear, I am still happy to send yours by post.

2. The colour layout means we can have more photos!!! So send them too – high resolution JPEG, TIFF, or GIFF are preferred. Photos must be in focus to be considered, and may be cropped before publication. Please label the files with your surname, genus, species, location (if relevant) and date taken – this will help me keep track of them once received.
3. I plan to include some themes in each Newsletter to focus people's thoughts and to encourage the “quiet” Group members into print. I will announce the theme for each Newsletter ahead of time. I have in mind themes around both species and activities. Any suggestions on good themes are welcome.
4. I plan to include reference to upcoming Eremophila-relevant events (publication-schedule dependent), news about *Eremophila* online etc – so feel free to alert me about these.

Finally, if you have any suggestions for the Newsletter, and/or the Group, please send them! This is your Study Group, and it will continue to thrive (or die) with your input (or lack thereof). Our job as Eremophila growers is to spread the word about this fabulous Australian genus, help get it grown more widely, and increase scientific and horticultural knowledge about it – so let's do that!



Lyndal Thorburn
Leader and
Newsletter Editor,
Eremophila Study
Group



E. duttonii

News from the Net

The ANPSA website section on Eremophilas has been updated (thanks to Ian Tranter). The Study Group page is at <http://anpsa.org.au/erem5.html> and information about books, journals and other online sites is at <http://anpsa.org.au/erem6.html>.

DID YOU KNOW? That there is an Eremophila Growers' page on Facebook: www.facebook.com/eremophilagrowers. Pictures are posted to show off, seek identification, or ask a question. Photos of Eremophila also appear from time to time on the Australian Native Plant Enthusiasts' Facebook page.

MY GARDEN

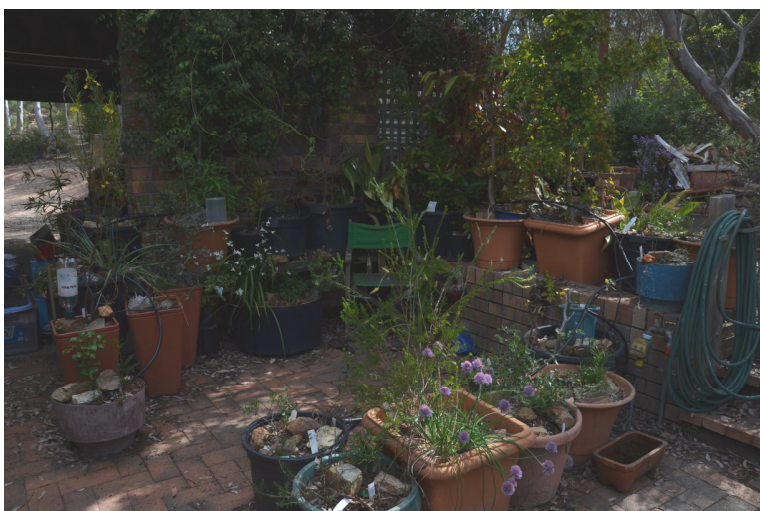
Contributions are invited from members for a section on "My Garden". Please supply photos and up to 400 words, describing your garden and the conditions under which you grow Eremophilas (mention other genera if you must!). You can include a photo of yourself if you like! To kick the section off, here is something about our garden in Queanbeyan NSW



Tom Jordan and Lyndal Thorburn's garden is on a north-east slope in Queanbeyan NSW. The 0.7Ha block is predominantly dry sclerophyll bushland (left), with significant overhead cover and poor, water-repellent, powdery soil. However, it is high on a hill and faces north-east, so is warmer than many Canberra sites and avoids many frosts. We get

630mm rain (or thereabouts) p.a.

Canberra only has one month officially without frosts (January) and we have an average of 99 frosts per year, of which 95 occur between April and October. We also get an average of 44 fogs per year. The riskiest time of year for our Eremophila is late winter/early spring, particularly in foggy years. We find the plants make it through the winter frost but are stressed by it, and that they sometimes succumb just as the weather is warming up.



We maintain new *Eremophila* spp. in pots (right) before planting them out into the garden. Once in the garden they are plumbed into the dripper system which uses town water and is programmed to water the whole garden once weekly. While we used to plant straight into the local soil, we now import

garden soil and build up raise beds which we then fertilise with slow release pellets – the aim is to get ahead of the tree roots, which invade as soon as they sense any water.



While we have some grafted plants (at left, pink *E bignoniiflora* and cream *E eriocalyx*), most of our plants are grown on their own roots. At last count, we had 120 *Eremophila* spp. in the garden.

I took the photo below in mid-Spring 2012, overcome by the amazing array of colours of what was flowering. Too many to list, but aren't they amazing?



Species that definitely WON'T grow here (frost tender) include *E freelingii*, *E gilesii*, *E polyclada*, *E oldfieldii* subsp. *angustifolium*, *E hillii*, *E saligna* and *E ionantha*. We also lose plants when we have La Nina seasons, during which we have up to 800mm of rain – species lost in recent La Nina periods include *E duttonii*, *E philippsii* and *E laanii*.

Events

Know of any events that your fellow Group members might want to hear about? Tell them here! Please provide at least 4 months' notice, to allow for the Newsletter publication schedule.

From your letters:

From Graham and Josephine Wilsen on the Flerieu Peninsula, SA: We have a 1.5 acre property planted with mainly Australian native plants including 20 - 30 species of Eremophilas. In 2013 our garden was awarded Best Open Garden by our local council. We also run a small native nursery and sell plants at our local market once a month - Wirranendi Native Plants. This is also our house name and means "place becoming a forest" in the local Kaurna language.

The Nursery address is 13 Allalange Tarn, Tatachilla SA 5171

Thanks to Sydney-based Charles Farrugia for these stunning photos of *Eremophilas* planted in his garden:



Left: *E. macmillaniana*

Below: *E. abietina ssp ciliata* (Lake Rason)



Left:

E fasciata grafted onto *Myoporum* rootstock. It is planted in full sun.

As this species does not tolerate wet foliage it is covered over every time it looks like rain and during winter nights. Humidity on its own does not seem to affect it but wet foliage and humidity are a killer.

Looking for cutting material?

If you are looking for a particular species, provide details to the Newsletter Editor – your interests and contact details will be published in the next edition so that other Members can contact you direct with offers to swap etc.

Names and cultivars

Ian Tranter is compiling a list of *Eremophila* cultivars along with links to online photos. There are still lots of gaps and possible duplications of names. Ian is keen to hear of links to any online photos of cultivars, or from people who have photos they wouldn't mind putting online. He is happy to send the list with photo links to any

interested Study Group members. Ian can be reached at [ian.tranter \(at\) exemail.com.au](mailto:ian.tranter@exemail.com.au)

Future Themes

Next issue of the Newsletter will feature:

1. *Eremophila latrobei*: send in your photos and information on growing this variable species, which occurs widely over the drier parts of Australia
2. *Eremophila* that grow in the shade: Many people are put off growing *Eremophila* because of their famed love of the hot sun. However many of us have found that they will grow and flower in the shade. If you have any good advice on species that will grow well in part or full shade, please send your stories and photos and we will publish a list in the next Newsletter.

Due date for material: 15 NOVEMBER 2015

About the Eremophila Study Group

The Eremophila Study Group aims to further knowledge about the cultivation, propagation and conservation of the 200+ species of Eremophilas, an endemic genus of Australian plants. It is one of several Study Groups which operates under the auspices of the Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) (ANPSA). Study Groups allow members with specific interests to develop that interest to the fullest extent and to contribute in a practical way to the body of knowledge on the Australian flora. Active members collect information on the plants being studied and forward their observations to the leader who collates and publishes the information, usually in a newsletter or in other Society publications. The Study Group can record any aspect of cultivation, propagation and ecology of the plants under study. All Study Groups are expected to publish at least two newsletters per year.

Each Study Group charges a small fee to cover expenses such as newsletter production and postage. Members must also be members of an ANPSA-affiliated regional society (<http://anpsa.org.au/region.html>).

The aims of the Study Group are:

- ❖ to study the cultivation and propagation of the genus *Eremophila*;
- ❖ to expand cultivation of *Eremophila* in gardens; and
- ❖ to examine the growing requirements of the various species to improve their reliability.

For information about the Eremophila Study Group contact:

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If your newsletter arrived by post, and you are able to receive it by email, PLEASE CONTACT ME so I can add your email address to the database!!! (note – email recipients of the PDF version get theirs in COLOUR!)

For more general information about Study Groups, contact:

Mr Neville Page
Coordinator, Study Groups, Australian Native Plants Society (Australia)
[lesandnevp \(at\) gmail.com](mailto:lesandnevp@icloud.com)

Want backcopies?

All newsletters are held by the National Library of Australia (NLA) in Canberra. Many APS State and regional groups also subscribe and are sent the Newsletter. A booklet called *The Study Group Newsletters 1972 - 1985* was produced in 1991 and is held in the NLA.