

EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER NO. 30 DECEMBER 1984

By the number of reports published in SGAP journals, eremophilas are becoming quite popular as garden plants. There are many species now available through the nursery trade and this has made some of the rarer ones not so hard to get. I was impressed by one article relating to the horticultural potential of both exotic and native plants. This article rightly pointed out that many exotic plants were of real merit and in many cases had far more attraction to the general public than many of our native plants. Relating some of the comments to our own particular genus I wonder which species of Eremophila would one put in the top five desirable species to grow. I realise no one grows all species but how about conducting our own survey as to which species have the most to offer. Not a difficult task, just place your name on the top of a sheet of paper and list your choice of five species with a brief comment about the reasons for your choice. The results will be in the next Newsletter if there are enough replies.

G.N.

FIELD TRIP TO SOUTH-WEST QUEENSLAND

PART 1

Bób Chinnock

During September Bill Barker and I did a general collecting trip to south-west Queensland for the S.A. Herbarium, travelling to the area via the Strzelecki Track and returning via Bourke and Broken Hill. While in Queensland we were accompanied by Betty Ballingal a very avid and knowledgeable plant collector who lives at Oakey. Betty has collected many eremophilas for me in the past and it was at her suggestion that I arranged the trip since south-west Queensland has received good rains this year.

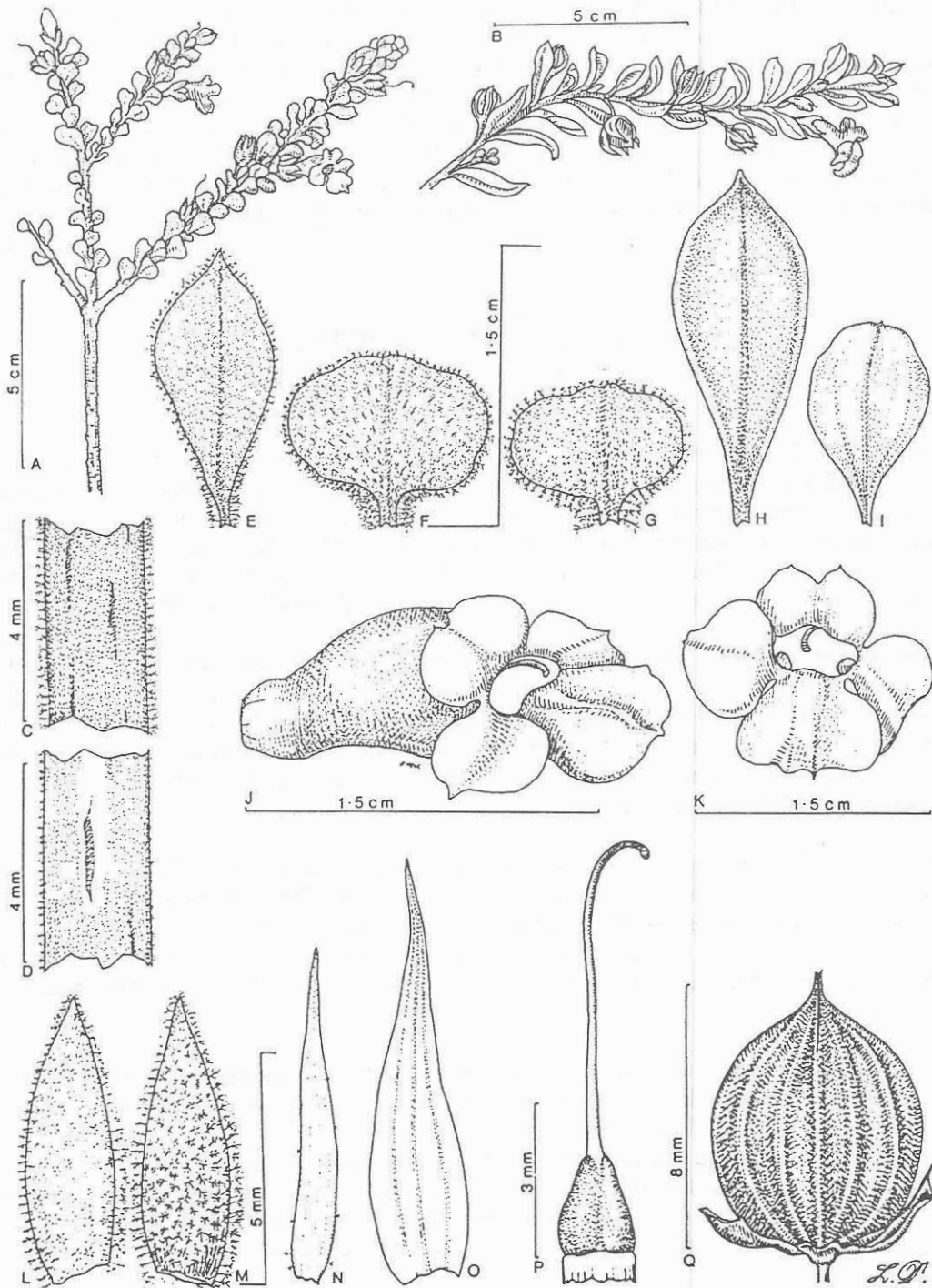
The only species of note on the Strzelecki Track were Eremophila macgillivrayi and E. obovata, both of which were common in the vicinity of Cordillo Downs. Interestingly the latter species has only recently been recorded for South Australia. My first encounter with E. dalyana (at long last) occurred between Betoota and Windorah where a large population was found growing on stony soils. The plants were in full flower, ranging in colour from pink to white.

When I described E. alatisepala a few years ago it was only known from Ray Isaacson's collections made near Palparara (Qld) and another from Currawilla (Qld). However, numerous populations were found in stony areas north and west of these original localities extending its range some 3° further north. This species is related to E. fraseri and is just as resinous. Flowers droop, have yellow winged sepals, and yellow to apricot corollas.

I was very keen to study and collect material of three undescribed species known from the south-west of Queensland. One, a tree species, is common in the Grey Range where it occurs on the upper slopes and on the tops of the hills. It is the tallest known species of Eremophila attaining heights of up to 11 metres. Superficially, it looks like E. oppositifolia in having grey tomentose leaves and branches. However the flowers are much smaller, more numerous in number, and the corolla and fruits are different. Although I found the species at a number of locations I could not find any flowering plants.

The second new species is the eastern equivalent of E. youngii. It has the red flowers of this species but the longer slender leaves of E. dalyana. The only previously known localities for this species were around Mt. Grey near Emmet but Betty Ballingal had a report of another collection much further south near Eulo. We found the population on the Black Gate Opal Mine—road, and found a yellow colour variant as well.

The third undescribed species is a low shrub to 30 cm high. It is closely related to *E. obovata* but differs in having linear leaves with revolute margins and hispid hairs on the leaves, branches, and sepals. This species is restricted to a small area between Winton and Opalton but it is extremely common within this area, dominating the ground layer.



Eremophila obovata

var. *obovata*

A, habit; C, enlargement of branch; E-G, leaf variations; L-M, inside and outside surface of sepal;

var. *glabriuscula*

B, habit; D, enlargement of branch; H-I, leaf variations; N-O, sepal variations; P, gynoecium; Q, front view of fruit.