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Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants
EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER NO. 35

The new heading above is a request from the Australian National Library so that they can standardize the storage of material from the various study groups.

As it is that time of the year again I extend my best wishes to you all and may your garden grow. Special thanks to the Director and his staff at the Adelaide Botanic Gardens for their assistance with the publication of the Eremophila Study Group Newsletter.

We have received a five page list of 49 eremophilas (including various forms) by Beverley O'Keeffe at "Wallalee" in Queensland. This list includes when the eremophilas were planted, their current status (September 1986) as well as brief notes on them. If any members would like a copy please send 25¢ (in stamps) to cover photocopy charges and it will be included in the next newsletter.

Geoff. Needham

Mature Eremophilas

by Geoff. Needham

What do you do with mature eremophilas? Some are long lived and may form small trees like E. bignoniflora, E. longifolia, E. mitchellii or E. oldfieldii. They present no problems providing they have room to grow, but this is not always possible on the suburban block. Other species look nice specimen plants for a number of years but then develop a woody appearance with the foliage limiting itself to the extremities of the branches. Drastic pruning can at times regenerate growth from the base but not always, some exceptions which come to mind are E. macdonnellii, E. nivea and E. viscida. The alternative is to replant those species you like in vacant spots which aren't always available in SGAP members gardens. It is an advantage to grow plants on in large containers to encourage good root growth before planting out as competition from the established plants is often detrimental. Recent reports have indicated the use of some form of fertiliser can also be of advantage to help establish plants. I would like to hear from those members who have encountered this maturity problem and how they have overcome it.

Regeneration of Eremophila species at Coombie after 1985 Bush fires

by Janet Houghton

All species of Eremophila in the Coombie area were severely burnt during the fires in January 1985.

There was very little sign of any recovery for many months, despite quite good rain in June and August '85. After 188 mm (7½") in October and another 38 mm (1½") in November the plants started to show signs of growing again.

Eremophila longifolia was the first to recover, leaves and new shoots appeared on the branches and root-suckers and small plants were seen in many areas of both Mallee and open country. Eremophila glabra also recovered well from the old bushes and later plenty of new seedlings came up. Eremophila glabra

prostrate vanished altogether for many months, but now there are many more plants than before. I have been able to transplant a few of these quite easily into my garden and they are now growing well.

Large numbers of Eremophila sturtii and E. mitchellii were burnt and about half have now shown signs of regeneration from the base of burnt bushes and sometimes from the branches. There are no small seedlings so far.

Eremophila serrulata has made good recovery. In one area of burnt out and dead mulga (Acacia aneura) there are now numerous seedlings whereas before the fires there were only a few old spindly bushes.

Eremophila oppositifolia is known only from two small areas and I have only been able to revisit one so far. The species has recovered slowly. Some trees appear dead and there are no signs of any root-suckers or seedlings. In this same area were four small shrubs, which were hybrids between Eremophila oppositifolia and E. serrulata. Two are dead and the other two are slowly re-growing from the stems, branches and base. There are two new suckers that I am hoping are from these plants. I was told that previous fires had probably brought up these hybrid plants so I am hoping that perhaps in a few years time I will find some more hybrids.

A new hybrid

by Bob Chinnock

In natural, undisturbed areas, eremophila hybrids are very rare and although I know of some 15 different Eremophila hybrid combinations from the wild, most of these are associated with some sort of disturbance, suchas roads, fences or fires. After vegetation disturbance the hybrid plant often seems to be able to get a foothold, however, it is rare to find more than one or two plants at a given site.

The potential for new hybrids appearing in the garden are naturally much higher than in the wild for a number of reasons. Firstly, we concentrate together many species into a small area, and few of these species would ever occur together in the wild. Secondly, if seed germination occurs in a favourable season the more open conditions of the garden would allow a potential hybrid seedling a better chance to survive.

Three years ago the conditions were obviously ideal in my garden with early rains and mild temperatures because over 50 seedling eremophilas appeared. Most of these were a form of E. glabra which I had pulled out the previous year, but there were also 11 E. alternifolia, 1 E. saligna, 1 E. christophorii as well as one seedling which I could not identify.

This seedling was in a very dry part of the garden and literally did not start growing until last year. This year it grew rapidly and flowered in August. The leaves of this plant are narrow linear-elliptic, glabrous, and the flower, although the shape of E. glabra have the colour and spotting of E. alternifolia. Sepal features are intermediate between E. glabra and E. alternifolia.

This putative hybrid has very good potential as it is a prolific flowerer so I hope to graft some portions soon and distribute them to a number of other growers. The plant is now overtopped by my E. inflata which has decided to go mad. It is now over 2 metres tall and broad.

Australian Cultivar Registration Authority

by Bob Chinnock

Recently I arranged, on behalf of the Study Group, the registration of the low spreading form of E. maculata which originated from the Goondiwindi area in Queensland. A photocopy (reduced) of the registration certificate is shown below.

ACRA

Australian Cultivar Registration Authority

Certificate of Registration

Registered Number 313

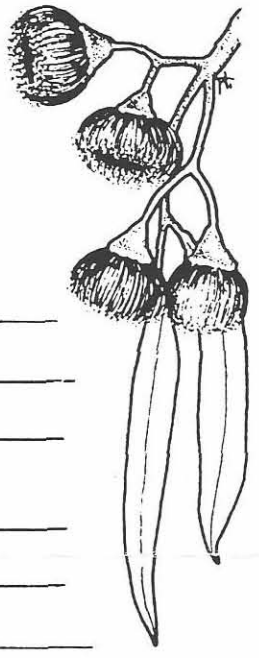
Registered Name Eremophila maculata 'Carmine Star'

Applicant Eremophila Study Group

Registrar's Signature G Butler

Countersigned A. B. Court

Date 27 October 1986



Articles are now wanted for our next Newsletter. Please write on alternate lines.

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