

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants
EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 42

December 1990

It seems only recently that I was folding Newsletter 41 and posting it off to you all. Now we are in the process of preparing this one.

Firstly, thank you to all members who have forwarded their subscription and in a number of cases more than the \$2. If you have overlooked your contribution could you please post it to me as soon as possible. If for any reason you do not wish to be further involved in the Study Group it would be appreciated if you would let me know; it does become quite costly to send Newsletters to people who are not interested or who do not wish to be further involved and it also means that those who are involved end up paying more to cover those costs.

Since the last newsletter a number of things have occurred.

The SGAP - SA Region has recently staged its annual Spring Show and Plant Sale. Thanks to the contributions of the local growers who are members of the Study Group, we were able to present a very comprehensive display of eremophilas for the public to see. Altogether we had on display approximately 60 species, including *E. prostrata*, *E. willsii*, *E. compacta*, *E. lactea*, *E. clarkei* together with many of the more commonly seen species. The Trading Table was well stocked with approximately 40 different species or varietal forms.

This has been a vital avenue for making the eremophilas available to the public of SA. It is most encouraging to note that this area of the Trading Table is one of the first to be cleared of the 'more desirable' species.

We have several quite young members of SGAP here in Adelaide who are very keen, and they have shown an interest in the genus; lets hope their enthusiasm will persist and that they will be of value to the Study Group in the future. Several have asked about joining the Group and I shall encourage them to do so.

Bob Chinnock has recently returned from a trip to WA, the results of which we will no doubt hear about in due course.

A student of mine at Urrbrae Agricultural High School has recently returned from an interesting trip to the Alfred & Marie Range in the Gibson Desert, WA, in search of *Eucalyptus ramelliana*. He returned with interesting material from a plant resembling *Eremophila willsii*, but it appears somewhat different from the forms with which I am familiar. It is great to see this kind of enthusiasm from a sixteen year old.

Several parcels of cutting material have been sent to members who asked especially for it. If I can, I will get material to members who ask, but I cannot guarantee a vast supply or from a wide selection.

As promised I have included with this Newsletter a copy of the membership list. It is complete to the end of July this year. Unfortunately I have not had time to have the additional 10 or so new members added. Their names and addresses have been written separately.

It is also of interest that several of our newer members are currently undertaking courses in botany at tertiary institutions. It is to be hoped that we as a group may be of some assistance to them and that their research may in turn be of value to us all.

FROM YOUR MAIL

The following notes have been extracted from the letters received in the past few months from members of the group.

Joan Hills refers to treatment of cuttings with rooting hormone powder then honey! The *Eremophila nivea* struck within a fortnight and numbers of other species, although not yet struck, are remaining fresh. Joan says she heard of the 'honey treatment' on Gardening Australia and is giving it a go on everything.

Peter Lewis, a teacher in WA says that some of his chemistry/biology students at school are exploring tissue culture and will try to see what happens with *Eremophila* species.

Lyndal Thorburn reports that she has managed to maintain quite a number of species despite the unwanted assistance of the dog. Conditions in Queanbeyan are at times quite cold and wet. Grafted plants as well as those on their own root system do quite well growing on a shale over clay, with plants being planted into raised rockery beds which have a base of blue metal, followed by dry straw from local grasses topped with about 15cm of local leaf mulch and compost. They seem to thrive in this mixture.

Cynthia & Ted Beasley are also having a lot of success with grafted plants, with Ted doing grafts with *Myoporum parvifolium* as stock. They state that the wet winter has had its effect on *E. macdonnellii*, *E. bowmanii* and other hairy leaf species; fungal attacks being quite severe and requiring plants to be heavily pruned back to remove the affected parts. After pruning back to healthy wood the plants are treated with Previcur; results so far have been encouraging.

Cheryl Moulder makes several interesting comments about the use of *Eremophila* species as street plants by the Thebarton Council in SA. She notes that there is an excellent specimen of *E. calorhabdos* in Rankin Road which reaches about 2m tall and is a dense bush about 1m across. This plant has coped for several years with the heat radiated from the asphalt, traffic fumes and severe pruning (to about 30cm) in late summer, early autumn. In addition the Council has made use of *E. macdonnellii*, *E. glabra* (ex Murchison River).

Cheryl also states that she has had very good results in striking *E. maculata* var. *brevifolia*, even without the use of hormones, by taking cuttings during summer. Results have been so good that cuttings taken one January have been 1m tall garden plants by February the next year. Cuttings taken at other times of the year have turned black in days. Cheryl has had similar problems with *E. christophorii*, *E. duttonii*, *E. neglecta* and *E. lactea* as well as several other species. Unfortunately the summer does not bring the same results with these species.

For *E. longifolia*, both green and silver leaf forms, Cheryl suggests that root suckers pulled when they are about 10 to 15cm tall are best. Roots are not trimmed but planted directly into potting mixture and then placed into a well protected spot and watered about once a week until established.

Frank Pritchard set up a plantation of Australian native plants about thirteen years ago at Galore Hill, approximately 15km north of Lockhart. Approximately five years ago he developed an interest in eremophilas and now has 67 species together with about 20 varietal forms. Anyone passing through Lockhart is I am sure most welcome to call in.

Beverley O'Keeffe also refers to *E. calorhabdos* needing constant tip pruning and that it stands up to the hot dry summers at Springsure, as well as many other species. Her three plants are growing in full sun and receive no artificial watering.

Beverley's comments about her procedures for planting her eremophilas may be of some help to members in the hot dry regions, as well as those more temperate.

Plants are planted out in autumn ideally, they are each given a bucket of water. Sometimes Terrasorb (which helps to retain moisture in the soil) is used. One or two follow-up waterings with rain water are given a month or so later; then the plant is on its own. Once new growth has started the plant is not watered again by her. Any plant which can't take this treatment dies, and something else is tried. Her success with eremophilas has been very good.

Pruning, she reports is best done when there is plenty of moisture in the soil. Die back has been in evidence after pruning if there has been a sudden dry spell after the pruning. Generally only about one third of the plant is pruned back at a time. A plant of *E. bignoniiflora*, approximately 4m high, was cut back to a 15cm stump and is back to its 4m level once again. *E. divaricata* and *E. polyclada* are very hard to kill by pruning. In general light pruning is recommended; and when done progressively the plants do not seem to get so woody or twiggy.

Thank you to all who have offered their notes on culture etc. It helps to make the task of preparing a Newsletter a lot easier and it also provides the group with more information.

NURSERIES

Thanks to the response from a number of members I am able to suggest some nurseries which others have found to be able to provide them with eremophilas. There are probably more; if you know of any I will include them in future Newsletters.

White Gums Nursery, STAWELL, Victoria

Lang's Native Nursery, Eleventh St, MILDURA WEST, Victoria

Nellie Nursery, MANNUM, South Australia

Green Gully Nursery, Duffield St, GAWLER, South Australia

David Shiells, Benalla Road, SHEPPARTON, Victoria

Plantscape Nursery, Main North Road, GAWLER, South Australia

Fisher's Nursery, ROCKHAMPTON, Queensland

Brookvale Park, OAKEY, Queensland

MEMBERS NOT ON ENCLOSED LISTING

Andrew Langford, PO Box 1655, ALICE SPRINGS, NT 0871

Tony Clark, 46 Randell St, MANNUM, SA 5238

Mrs Suzanne Clark, Lot 17 Robertson Road, NEW GISBOURNE, Victoria 3438

Jamie Mugridge, 12 Corpe Ave, PORT NOARLUNGA, SA 5167

Mrs Chris Prossor, RMB 2305 STRATHMERTON, Victoria 3641

Arthur & Ruth Pratt, 63 Cungena Ave, PARK HOLME, SA, 5043

Tim Parsons, 133 New England Hwy, RUTHERFORD, NSW, 2320

Klaus Querengasser, PO Box 73, ST.LUCIA, Queensland 4067

Ian Walton, PO Box 120, TENNANT CREEK, NT, 0861

Guy Richmond, Curtin University, GPO Box U1987, PERTH, WA, 6001

Murdoch Branch (WA Wildflower Society), c/- 5 Danzil St, WILLAGEE, WA 6165

Nowra Group SGAP, PO Box 618, NOWRA, NSW, 2541

Eremophila behriana

About two years ago my wife and I decided to follow the road from Karoonda towards Peebinga in the upper mallee area of South Australia, in the hope of finding some different colour forms of *Prostanthera aspalathoides* and in the process, perhaps some *eremophilas*.

We stopped at a small, now deserted siding named Mulpata for morning coffee, and afterwards decided to walk along the railway line. We did find some of the wanted *prostantheras*, together with a compact growing, very floriferous form of *Eremophila glabra*, which has since proven to be a very easy to grow, and strike, small (30cm) shrub. Not expecting to find anything else we started to move back to the car, only to find several small plants of an *Eremophila* which I did not at the time identify. Having found one plant, it was not long before we had located at least twenty, some of which were fully exposed alongside the railway line and others shaded by small shrubs. One plant had been affected by a grader clearing the roadside, and was clearly benefiting from the pruning, for it was about 30cm across at its base and sending up numerous growths. We have revisited this area several times since, and have noted no decline in the population or its well-being.

The type location for *Eremophila behriana* is southern Eyre Peninsula. In the past few years colonies have been found in the central York Peninsula, Kangaroo Island, Upper Lofty Ranges and the Murraylands. This location is the furthest east for the species. It is possible that its distribution is more widespread, and may even extend further into Victoria, and further north.

Colin Jennings

RAISING EREMOPHILAS FROM SEED

One of the most frequent questions I am asked by people wanting to join the Study Group is - "Can I grow them from seed?"

My answer has to be a qualified yes. There is mainly anecdotal information, but it would appear that there is very little information obtained from structured experiments or really well documented research.

If any member has done any work in this field and can pass on their findings, I am sure that we would all benefit. In addition, anyone with the interest to pursue this, might like to start up some experiment to distinguish between the myths and presently unknown facts. Any takers?

---oooOOooo---

Leila Scott from Karoonda, SA, is seeking some help about *Myoporum platycarpum* x *Eremophila crassifolia*. Near to her is a plant growing in the scrub, but unfortunately it is starting to become very woody and is in 'poor health'. She has attempted to strike cuttings, but so far to no avail. Can anyone offer any useful suggestions, preferably about a successful procedure they have used with this hybrid.

It would be a great pity for the original plant to be lost without some plants being produced from it.

Leader: Colin Jennings, 4 Kinnaird Crescent, **HIGHBURY, S.A. 5089**

Editor: Bob Chinnock (C/- Address below)

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NAME	ADDRESS1	CITY	STATE	POSTCODE
SGAP ALICE SPRINGS	PO BOX 3588	ALICE SPRINGS	NT	0871
CONNIE SPENCER	PO BOX 945	ALICE SPRINGS	NT	0871
D G BROOKS	138 RIDGECROP DRIVE	CASTLE HILL	NSW	2154
RAY PAGE	34 OLD GLENHAVEN RD	GLENHAVEN	NSW	2154
EAST HILLS SGAP C/O MRS JUNE GAY	3 BAUMANS ROAD	RIVERWOOD	NSW	2210
NOEL GANE	11 KALLARA AVE	PANANIA	NSW	2213
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CHERYL MOULDER	195 RYANS RD	ELTHAM	VIC	3095
MAX McDOWALL	10 RUSSELL ST	BULLEEN	VIC	3105
MAROONDAH GROUP SGAP	PO BOX 33	RINGWOOD	VIC	3134
MIKE BURSTON	32 MASON ST	STH YARRA	VIC	3141
FOOTHILLS GROUP SGAP	PO BOX 65	BORONIA	VIC	3155
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L. STEINHARDT	LOT 56 LAURETTE RD MS 231	LAIDLEY	QLD	4341
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MRS J SKED	PO BOX 41	LAWNTON	QLD	4501
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