

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants  
EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 47

August 1992

The winter is well on its way to being over for another year, I trust that it has been good to you and your garden and for those who rely on the weather for their living, that it has been favourable. I notice that there are a large number of eremophilas either in flower or showing the signs of another good flowering season. Let us hope that this is so, particularly since we have two important displays coming up in the next month or so.

Thank you to those who have sent their subscriptions in the last month or so. Whilst \$2 is a small amount it would still be appreciated if those who have not made their contribution could do so as soon as possible. To the ASGAP groups who make their annual contributions, thank you sincerely.

On your behalf I will be attending the Study Group Leaders' Workshop and Seminar to be held in Canberra on 24 and 25 October this year. It will be a rushed trip from Adelaide, since it does not now coincide with the school vacation, but the airlines schedules fit neatly with my commitments. Although I do not have a detailed agenda, the following items are listed.

ACCESS TO PROFESSIONAL BOTANISTS  
ADMINISTRATION  
COLLECTING FROM WILD  
CUTTING EXCHANGE  
FUNDING  
HERBARIA  
LIBRARY  
LIVING COLLECTIONS  
NEWSLETTERS

PLANT TRIALLING  
PROPAGATION  
PUBLICITY & PUBLIC RELATIONS  
QUESTIONNAIRES  
RECORDING  
REGISTERING CULTIVARS  
SEED BANKS  
SLIDE PROGRAMMES  
STUDY GROUP LEADERS HANDBOOK

If any member wishes to make any suggestions or comments regarding this list, they should let me know about them by about the middle of October. I hope that it will be of some real value both personally and to the Group overall. I shall make a report in the next Newsletter.

Colin Jennings

DISPLAYS — SHOWS

Prior notice of the two events was given in the last newsletter, we hope that you will be able to do as much as is possible to make them both excellent affairs. They will both be valuable opportunities to further publicise the eremophilas.

SHEPPARTON SHOW

A letter from David Randall in July gives some more detailed information about this show.

He writes:

"Thank you very much for the article in the last newsletter, the organising of our flower show is going extremely well.

If anyone is coming across for the weekend who can bring some material on Friday 11 September, if they can let me know I can arrange a billet with one of our Shepparton members for them, if not could any material that members can send be sent by Comet C.O.D. to Mr David Shiells, Mason Crt RSD, Shepparton East so that it arrives in Shepparton on the Friday or before. Any material sent would be greatly appreciated."

To make a contribution from the Adelaide area, cuts for display can be sent to Colin (address below) by Wednesday 9 September, whatever is received will be forwarded to David.

### ADELAIDE SHOW

Whilst this show is in Adelaide, we would like it to be one that is representative.

A number of SA members have been approached to grow plants in pots for this display. We have a space approximately 6 m x 3 m to develop our display, so it will require a large number of potted plants as well as cuts.

We have been invited as a group to present the eremophilas as part of the ASGAP SA Region's Spring Flower Show; last year the Daisy Study Group set the scene, and each year a different Study Group will be invited to put on a presentation.

We plan to make a start on the display on Thursday, 1 October, but most of the work will be done on the following day. We would like all contributions to be at the Show-grounds by noon on Friday.

Cuts from members from interstate can be sent to Colin to arrive by Thursday afternoon.

Since these two events each require a major effort, your help will be greatly appreciated. We thank you in anticipation of your support.

### SPEAKERS FOR ASGAP GROUP MEETINGS

I have in the past few months been asked to either speak at such meetings or if not available myself to advise the writer of someone who would be able to assist. I have been able to help on a few occasions, but my work commitments prevent me from obliging, unless the meeting is nearby or coincides with school holidays.

I have taken the liberty of suggesting several members whom I know have spoken on the subject, leaving it up to the group to make the contact.

To make this a bit easier I would appreciate it if members who are able and willing to speak at meetings on eremophilas, or for that matter other topics, could drop me a line and let me know of their interest, availability and even preparedness to travel to speak.

Colin Jennings

### FROM YOUR LETTERS

Thank you to the many who have written in the past few months. We have managed to send out some twenty or so of the booklets in that time - please keep on promoting it, if each ASGAP Group in Australia purchased a copy we could despatch a further fifty or so.

David Randall, in addition to information re the Shepparton Show, reports that the majority of his plants are continuing to grow well; two casualties over the summer were *E. obovata* and the prostrate *E. macdonnellii*. Severe frost in his area late in June did have some minor effect on garden plants. David also lists some forty/fifty plants growing successfully in his garden and he offers cutting material to anyone who cares to write to him. I have a list of David's plants and some details of their progress, but have insufficient room to print it here. If anyone wants a copy I shall send one on request.

Jan Hall, Yarawonga has asked for some assistance. Jan operates a nursery and is making a positive effort to increase the number of eremophilas available to her customers, but also wishes to compile lists of plants which are suited to the region. Clay soils, dry summers and wettish winters, rainfall 460 mm per annum are the prevailing conditions. She is seeking information on how to go about compiling such a list.

[A questionnaire was sent to members about five or so years ago, with the hope of compiling such lists, however, the response was rather sparse and unfortunately the compilation did not eventuate.]

Bruce Grose, Eltham, Melbourne has recollected some memories of plants in the Whyalla-Cowell region of the Eyre Peninsula (SA). Bruce refers to some plants he was shown of a prostrate plant growing in abundance; it had dark green leaves the flowers were green and purplish red in colour but he is unsure of the identity of it. He also makes note of the fact that despite the very high temperatures, the soil temperature below the plants was quite a lot lower and that the soil just 15 - 30 cm below the surface was quite moist.

Ian Walton, Tennant Creek (NT) operates, with a partner, Eremaea Horticultural Enterprises, they offer a consultancy service in environmental and resource related activities.

When Ian rang to ask for some cutting material I encouraged him to write a brief note for the newsletter. I have extracted the following.

"... Material from the bush here doesn't hold a lot of promise for propagating, unless I go out and water it! There is a plant or so of a prostrate *E. goodwinii* with a lilac flower. Our version of *E. longifolia* is probably not as interesting as the Alice Springs type. *E. latrobei* forms here are the glabrous sort. *E. goodwinii* is rare here. If I make a trip 150 - 250 km south of here I can find a lot more plants. We sort of run out of eremophilas in this part of the distribution. There is a colony of *E. duttonii* further north of here at an outstation called Kulumpulpa. Not far from the small community I saw amongst the *E. duttonii*, one *E. maculata*. This is a repeat of an association to be found about 20 - 40 km north of Alice Springs. That's it! We have to be travelling to find them. I know of some good forms of *E. ovata* around Hatches Creek, but it is not easy to find. Near to that is also *E. freelingii* and *E. gilesii* and very occasionally a good form of *E. duttonii*. Sometimes excellent forms of *E. latrobei* and *E. longifolia* are found.

Our winds have started, which is a sign of summer heat, most of the acacias have been in flower and the wind signals the start of ripening. I have been putting in cuttings of whatever eremophilas I do have access to. There aren't many plants cultivated in the town, compared with Alice Springs. We like to promote them at the nursery and believe they are becoming increasingly popular.

For the nursery Nick and I are concentrating on whatever we can get into pot culture; mostly they are sold before they get out of the tubes.

I'm interested in suckering species also. I am hoping to get the local plants into cultivation, especially the prostrate *E. goodwinii*.

Immature ovule or embryo culture would seem to be the fastest way to get onto seedling material for rapid multiplication of *Eremophila*. Do you know if anyone has done any? I have a tissue culture laboratory, but it is still in Adelaide. We hope to set it up here and I was thinking of trying just that idea with *Eremophila*. Other genera will germinate on simple media. I am wondering if excised ovules of *Eremophila* will do the same. Any comments?"

### STUDY GROUP BOOKLET

We still have a good supply of these. Please promote it amongst your native plant growing friends and your local SGAP group. Cost is \$6. Please note that postage is now \$2.75 due to postage rate increases.

### ABC — GARDENING AUSTRALIA

It is pleasing to note that eremophilas have been featured in an article in the August issue of the magazine (pp 32-35) and on the programme which went to screen on Friday 14 August.

In the published article, a number of photographs illustrate Ray Isaacson's plants. The article is a good general report on the cultivation of eremophilas.

The TV programme was based on the plants growing in the Olive Pink Flora Reserve in Alice Springs. The five minutes devoted to this segment was also of general interest and should have given the grower some useful clues for growing eremophilas.

One interesting statement made in both presentations was the reference to the need for the fruits to be eaten by emus as a prerequisite to germination of the seeds contained therein. I think that this is a questionable 'myth'.

A useful bibliography was provided in the magazine, with eight titles listed for further reading.

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