

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants
EREMOPHILA STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER No. 58

May 1996

In this newsletter I have to report on some of the results of the census taken last year. If perchance you *did not return your information*; would you please do so – I can still make use of the information.

I have only had two replies indicating the need for an update of the newsletters in a booklet form, so it would appear to be not a priority to pursue.

Thanks to those of you who have provided me with information which I can reproduce in the newsletter, but I am sure that there are many more of you who could put pen to paper and share with us all your experiences, good or bad. Of particular interest would be your reports on successes and failures with cuttings and seeds, referring to your methods and the effects of different treatments.

I still have a small amount of clean fruits, supplied by Meg Officer. If anyone would like a small selection, I can forward them to you; cost will be the postal charges only, by return mail.

Colin Jennings

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Subscriptions are due again by **30 June 1996**.

They remain at \$2, since we are still able to meet our expenses. This is largely due to the support given to the Study Group by the staff at the Herbarium of the Adelaide Botanic Garden; our typing and printing being done there gratis. Our expenses being for postage and paper.

If you have a red sticker on the top of your newsletter, then your subscriptions are now due and payable. A number of members pay for several years at a time to cut costs on cheques and money orders. This is quite acceptable.

LIFE MEMBERSHIP OF SGAP – SA REGION

It is with much pleasure that I report on the Life Membership bestowed on Ray Isaacson for his contribution to the Eremophila Study Group, together with his continued, almost life long support of the Parrakie Group of SGAP. Parrakie is approximately halfway between Tailem Bend and Pinnaroo, in the Murray Mallee.

Ray's nomination was put forward by the Parrakie Group, supported, at the request of the Group, by Bob Chinnock and Colin Jennings. In our supporting statements, we referred to the extensive work which Ray has done over the past 25 years or more, as a member of the Study Group. Ray was one of the early 'explorers', who sought out eremophilas in Western Australia, South Australia, Northern Territory and Queensland. Together with his wife Betty, Ray travelled extensively, searching for and

collecting new species. Many of his collected plants have found their way into the herbarium of the Adelaide Botanic Garden, having been used as the type specimens.

Ray has been a stalwart of the Study Group, having been one of the first to find the most effective way to graft eremophilas onto myoporums. This is now the usual process, adopted both by amateurs and commercial interests alike. He has always been prepared to show others his methods and has never failed to attract a gathering when he has been demonstrating his techniques at seminars, monthly meetings or a shows.

It has been Ray, on many occasions, who has provided cutting material from his own collection of growing plants at Geranium, originally from the farm, and more lately from his house block in the town.

In earlier times Ray contributed many fine articles to the newsletter which detailed his trips and his collections. He encouraged others to grow eremophilas as well as the many other Australian native plants which he has come to love so much.

It was a great privilege to have been invited to attend the presentation of the Life Membership to Ray at Geranium on 29 March. There were a number of Adelaide SGAP'ers present as well as Bob Chinnock and his wife Shona.

Ray's introduction to eremophilas was to say the least a bit unusual. He had contacted Bob Chinnock and was invited in to talk with Bob about collecting. Bob is not sure what Ray thought as he left, but Bob had loaded him up with plant press, collecting book etc., etc., and wished him well. It was obviously a significant meeting since Ray has continued his firm interest ever since.

Congratulations Ray, on a well deserved honour, not lightly bestowed, and granted only to the most deserving.

Colin Jennings

WESTERN AUSTRALIA REVISITED

(The following article is extracted from a letter received from Russell Wait, Natya, Victoria – Russell managed to cover a very large part of Western Australia, north of Kalgoorlie, and from his log it would appear that something over 3,000 km of WA roads/tracks were traversed.)

After crossing the SA/WA border on the way to Norseman we saw, *Eremophila subfloccosa*, *E. decipiens*, *E. scoparia*, *E. purpurascens*, *E. dempsteri*, *E. interstans*, *E. calorhabdos*, *E. psilocalyx*, *E. weldii* and *E. glabra*.

After leaving Norseman we travelled to Peak Charles where there had been a large fire in January 1991. The *E. calorhabdos* we found were up to 4 m high, and one which I found did not branch for the first 1.25 m, having 13 branches overall. A couple were over 2 m tall and unbranched, swaying in the wind with no sign of being blown over – perhaps this is a good case for NOT pruning this species! There was a very thick stand of *E. subfloccosa* for about 0.5 km, with their yellow flowers putting on a great show. *Eremophila decipiens* subsp. *linearifolia* had bright flowers and was growing together with a broader leaf form. *Eremophila labrosa* was found here, growing in deep sand.

All of these had come up after the fire, except *E. dichroantha*, which was growing in an unburnt area. Young plants of *E. physocalyx*, *E. scoparia*, *E. interstans*, *E. dempsteri* and *E. glabra* were found in this burnt area, indicating that they might well respond to smoke treatment, but I would suggest that many of the dryland species have evolved without fire.

From Leonora we went on to Sturt Meadows Station where we found *E. "glandulifera"*. This is a grey, woolly shrub, not unlike *E. forrestii*, only with smaller leaves and bright pink flowers with glandular hairs on the sepals. *Eremophila forrestii* was in the area, and some I saw showed signs of having had water to within 25 cm of the top. Some had lost leaves, but were reshooting. The water was from cyclone Bobby, which struck the area early in 1995, when they received 250 mm. *Eremophila "hygrophana"* was also nearby and was growing where the water had been; it looked as though it had grown from an old root. It was lush with its grey to gold foliage and flowering well. On the way back through Leonora I found a bright pink flowered form of *E. "glandulifera"*, much brighter than the 'normal' form. On a rocky hill we located *E. "shonae"*, a shrub to about 2 m tall with blue flowers. *Eremophila foliosissima* was found on the station, but most of the plants looked very dry since they had not received a drink for ages, even though they had had running water below them from the cyclone. *Eremophila spectabilis* subsp. "*brevis*" was much the same a bit further on. Also found were *E. pantonii* with hooks on the ends of the leaves. Further on we saw *E. alternifolia*, lots of them and in magnificent pink.

After travelling through Agnew at the turn for Sandstone *E. platythamnos* was growing very well on sand with *E. forrestii* and *Eucalyptus gongylocarpa*.

In the sand at the foot of the Booylogo Range was *E. "spuria"*. This was a thin, wispy shrub up to 2 m high with very light blue flowers. *Eremophila "jucunda"* was located with the gold hairs on the sepals. Further on, three distinct forms of *E. simulans* were found growing together. These were small shrubs to about 1 m high, with blue flowers, growing under mulga trees.

From Sandstone two hybrids of *E. fraseri* and *E. platycalyx* were found growing together with the parent species. *Eremophila pantonii* had very bright blue flowers, but they were not as large as the ones in cultivation. At first I thought it was *E. scoparia*. *Eremophila miniata*, mostly the salmon pink form was found, but we did see one red and one yellow flowered form.

This brought us to Mt. Magnet, from where we travelled to Cue. On the way we found *E. macmillaniana*, a rounded 2 m shrub growing on a stony slope.

On leaving Cue we found *E. spathulata*, a stiff, grey leaved shrub to about 1.5 m high and with blue flowers. Approximately 50 km further on we found *E. "phyllopoda"*, a dirty grey, rounded shrub about 2 m high. This was quite different from the form which we found some 300 km further along the trail. The other form was more spreading in its habit, about the same height, and with flowers ranging from pink through blue to off-white. This was at Aurilla Creek. Also found here was *E. fraseri*, growing to 2.5 m and looking very lush. *Eremophila cuneifolia* was found as a spreading shrub to about 1 m high, with its blue flowers and very distinctive, brightly coloured calyx.

Heading towards Mt Augusta Station we saw *E. "conferta"* as an open blue flowered shrub growing to 2 m, but with branches going in all directions. The low, compact, domed shrub. *E. "flaccida"* had large shiny leaves and was seen over quite a distance at the entrance to the station. It had a large flower and calyx, not unlike *E. abietina*, only larger and much brighter.

From Mt Augusta we headed towards Mt Frazer. *Eremophila* "reticulata" was growing in very harsh conditions together with *E. gilesii* which had been reduced to a few sticks only about 20 cm high. *Eremophila* "reticulata" was not much better, 30 cm high with a few pink flowers and struggling to survive. They were growing out on a plain where all of the plants were small and sparsely grown. Also located here were low, sparse shrubs of *E. "caespitosa"*, 40 cm high and with the odd blue flower, doing it very hard indeed. This area was the driest of all that we had travelled through, and had clearly seen little rain. Near Mt Frazer we came across *E. spectabilis* subsp. *spectabilis*, growing on rocky slopes; the plants here were about 2 m tall.

From Meekatharra to Wiluna was very dusty, the dust hung in the air due to the stillness, and the road was badly corrugated. If you stopped to go for a walk a cloud of dust rose from the plants.

All in all it was a very good trip, with 8,763 km travelled in the 19 days.

Russell Wait

FROM YOUR LETTERS

Russell Wait – Natya, Victoria

(Russell has, together with his interesting report, supplied a list of the frost sensitive plants.)

"Here is a list of frost sensitive plants, although I am not sure where you draw the line as to what is frost sensitive, as I am sure that it depends on the length of time that they are exposed to the frost. *E. "acrida"*, *E. barbata*, *E. "citrina"*, *E. cordatisepala*, *E. "crenulata"*, *E. elderi*, *E. exilifolia*, *E. freelingii*, *E. "hispidata"*, *E. hughesii*, *E. "jucunda"*, some forms of *E. latrobei*, *E. linsmithii*, *E. macgillivrayi*, *E. "magnifica"*, *E. "mirabilis"*, *E. pentaptera*, *E. "prostrata"*, and *E. spinescens*.

The following also appear to be affected by being cut back. *E. bowmanii* (some forms), *E. cordatisepala*, *E. oppositifolia*, *E. forrestii*, *E. "stenophylla"* and *E. tetraaptera*."

Philip Docherty – Karratha, Western Australia

(Philip is a new member of the Study Group who provided the following information in his first letter. He has followed this up in subsequent letters.)

"To the best of my knowledge only four species grow in the Karratha area, these are *E. longifolia*, *E. cuneifolia*, *E. maculata* and *E. maitlandii*. There are, however, many other species which have been planted in the town and they thrive here.

Recently I enrolled in a horticultural course at the local college, in which we engaged in propagating and trying to grow the *Eremophila* species available. This has been mainly using cuttings, but we have also had some success with *E. maculata* seed, scattering the fruits in a thin layer of leaf litter and sand.

The following are some of the results so far obtained.

| | |
|---------------------------------------|--|
| <i>E. maculata</i> yellow & red forms | Excellent success rate in a wide range of potting media. |
| <i>E. macdonnellii</i> | Excellent success rate in perlite and pindan. |

| | |
|----------------------|--|
| <i>E. linearis</i> | About 30% success rate in perlite and pindan. |
| <i>E. latrobei</i> | About 5% success in river sand and perlite. |
| <i>E. pterocarpa</i> | Has shown leaf growth but no roots. |
| <i>E. forrestii</i> | Has shown some leaf growth, but no roots (12/11/95). Looks were deceiving, have about 50% success rate (4/1/96). |

E. forrestii and *E. compacta* both show a high incidence of rotting. *E. cuneifolia* has finally struck with the help of some welcome rain (13/2/96)."

Phil Keane – Gymea, New South Wales

(Phil is another new member, who operates a native nursery in Gymea. He has been running the nursery for 12 years and has concentrated on raising his own material, focussing currently on grafting. He has an excellent range of grevilleas, with an increasing list of eremophilas.)

"I have ... and have assiduously avoided eremophilas. Although greatly interested in all native species, my perceived difficulty in growing (surviving) eremophilas in Sydney has left a huge void in my appreciation of them. Recently, however, I have started to graft more eremophilas, but find that I know very little about the vast majority. Joining the study group is meant to bridge the gap."

Frank Prichard – Lockhart, New South Wales

(Frank, has unfortunately spent some time in hospital, but is, I understand, on the way back to normal. He was disappointed to find when he visited the collection at Galore Hill, Lockart, that the eremophilas had been sadly neglected. Frank was responsible for the collection being put together in the reserve.)

"Two officers of the National Botanic Gardens in Canberra contacted me and asked if they could come to Lockhart and obtain samples of eremophilas from the reserve. I approved and went out with them. They took small cuttings from every variety. Apparently they wish to make a plantation in Canberra."

Ian Jardine – Broadmeadows, Victoria

(Ian was sent a parcel of cutting material, and has kindly written to advise of his procedure. Unfortunately, even using Express delivery services, one can't predict the weather conditions during transit or on delivery. The weather turned hot on the day of arrival and sad to say the cuttings suffered. Hopefully Ian has been successful with some of the material.)

"I did all of the cuttings the same way to get them done as quickly as possible. The cuttings were freshened in water, then sat in an extremely weakened solution of plant starter and Seasol mix. Later they were dipped in Clonex gel (3g/L) and placed in a medium of washed, sharp sand (heat treated) and a mix of peat moss and coconut fibre. The cuttings were then watered in with the starter/Seasol mixture and placed in an old fish tank."

Brother Howard – Tabulam, New South Wales

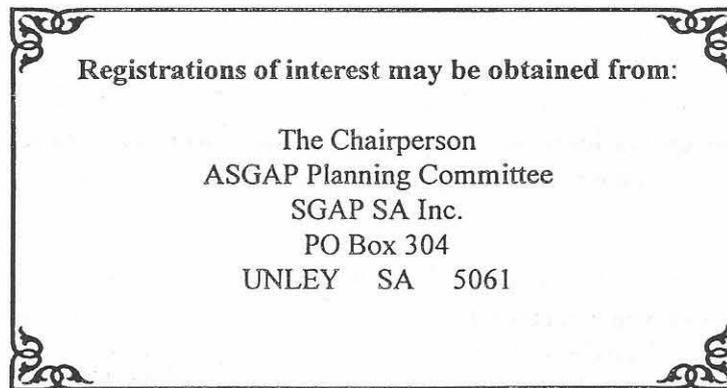
"I have had mixed success with the cuttings you sent. Some took root almost immediately, others were extremely slow. Several species took one look at me and died of shock – instantly! All told I had about a 35% strike rate. The easiest were *E. alternifolia*, and *E. ternifolia*. Only

one cutting of *E. resinosa* struck, but it is growing very strongly indeed. *Eremophila abietina*, *E. christophorii* and *E. verticillata* were the most sensitive. *Eremophila pantonii*, *E. drummondii* and *E. "pinnatifida"* have also done very well. All are now well advanced in 125 mm pots and adjusting to being in 'real' local soil.

On the trip to the Darling Downs in late 1995 I picked up some plants at a nursery (Ausplant) at Dalby."

SGAP CONFERENCE – ADELAIDE 1997

The SA Region of the Society for Growing Australian Plants will be holding the 1997 Biennial Conference of ASGAP at Annesly College, Wayville SA, from Saturday 27 September to Friday 3 October.



In conjunction with this conference it may be possible to conduct a seminar for members of the Eremophila Study Group; either before or after the conference dates. It would be rather difficult to organise anything during the conference times due to the very tight schedule and the programme of speakers which spans Monday to Friday.

We held a stand alone seminar several years ago and it proved to be very successful.

If anyone is interested in such an event would you please let Colin know within the next few months, with preferred dates either side of the conference dates. It might be possible to conduct a one day session. The Saturday following the conference would seem to be the best time.

EREMOPHILA CENSUS

In the last issue I reported very briefly on the most popularly grown eremophilas. I have not had a lot of time to sort out all of the possible analyses, but I am able to pass on some information gleaned from your returned sheets.

As one might expect, there are quite a few species and subspecies which are not in cultivation, this being due to their scarcity in their habitats.

It is also not unexpected to find that many of us are not sufficiently familiar with the subspecies forms to be able to identify them in our collections – the only way to know of their presence is if we have had the information on the labels when we purchased the plants or had them given to us.

From the list it would appear that the following are not presently in cultivation. If you did have any of them growing, please advise Colin as soon as possible.

| | | | |
|--------------------------|--------------------------|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| <i>E. "accrescens"</i> | <i>E. "conglomerata"</i> | <i>E. "lanata"</i> | <i>E. "incisa"</i> |
| <i>E. adenotricha</i> | <i>E. "cryptothrix"</i> | <i>E. "lanceolata"</i> | <i>E. "recurva"</i> |
| <i>E. "anomala"</i> | <i>E. "demissa"</i> | <i>E. "micrantha"</i> | <i>E. "reticulata"</i> |
| <i>E. "appressa"</i> | <i>E. "dendritica"</i> | <i>E. "obliquisejala"</i> | <i>E. "retropila"</i> |
| <i>E. arachnoides"</i> | <i>E. "enata"</i> | <i>E. "occidens"</i> | <i>E. "revoluta"</i> |
| <i>E. "arenaria"</i> | <i>E. falcata</i> | <i>E. "pallida"</i> | <i>E. "rigens"</i> |
| <i>E. "arguta"</i> | <i>E. "fasciata"</i> | <i>E. "pendulina"</i> | <i>E. "splendens"</i> |
| <i>E. "attenuata"</i> | <i>E. "flabellata"</i> | <i>E. "petrophila"</i> | <i>E. "tenella"</i> |
| <i>E. "aurivisca"</i> | <i>E. glutinosa</i> | <i>E. "phyllopoda"</i> | <i>E. undulata"</i> |
| <i>E. "caespitosa"</i> | <i>E. graciliflora</i> | <i>E. "pilosa"</i> | <i>E. "vernicosa"</i> |
| <i>E. "canaliculata"</i> | <i>E. "gracillima"</i> | <i>E. "prolata"</i> | <i>E. "viscimarginata"</i> |
| <i>E. "coacta"</i> | <i>E. "humilis"</i> | <i>E. "pungens"</i> | <i>E. "warnesii"</i> |
| <i>E. "congesta"</i> | | | |

If you have species which are not identified, it should be possible to have them identified. A small cutting, preferably with fruits, and/or flowers, placed within absorbent paper can be sent to Colin Jennings or Bob Chinnock. Do not wrap in plastic – it will cause them to sweat.

The following species are apparently being grown in a single collection. It would seem imperative to make sure that this plant is propagated and for material to be made available to as many members as possible to ensure its continued survival. We have in the past lost species, due to plants being held as single units and not being propagated and distributed. Please do your best in this regard.

| | | | |
|-------------------------|----------------------|-------------------------|----------------------|
| <i>E. "annosocaula"</i> | <i>E. "eversa"</i> | <i>E. "muelleriana"</i> | <i>E. "shonae"</i> |
| <i>E. "campanulata"</i> | <i>E. "fallax"</i> | <i>E. "papillata"</i> | <i>E. "simulans"</i> |
| <i>E. "ciliata"</i> | <i>E. "flaccida"</i> | <i>E. ramiflora</i> | |
| <i>E. "clavata"</i> | <i>E. "hirsuta"</i> | <i>E. "rhegos"</i> | |

It is quite probable that some of these species listed above are being grown by native species enthusiasts other than members of the Study Group who are known to you. If this is so, please encourage them to 'part with' a small piece to allow you to get it growing in your collection.

So many of the *Eremophila* species are endangered, and it is illegal to collect them from their habitats, without special permits, which are themselves very much restricted. It behoves us all to maintain those species we have in collections, and to not put stress on the wild plant populations.

Colin Jennings

Note: all names in parentheses are manuscript names.

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