

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants

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Goodeniaceae Study Group Newsletter No. 10
Oct/1992

Leader:

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Hello everyone,

Since this is pessimistically the last newsletter of the calendar year, I would like to wish everybody in the study group an enjoyable Xmas and a profitable New Year. After a very disjointed year I am back on deck and attempting to pick up the threads again. I estimate I have only been at home for about 3 months of this year and even then only in snatches, so my garden has not had the attention it deserves. Losses however have been light except in the area of propagation where a few experiments in potting mixes have been mildly disastrous. I am even more convinced now that soilless mixes are not the way to go if extended periods in pots are envisaged. I noticed with interest experiments by my mentor Max Hewitt in using Brickie's sand and aggregate mixes in his garden beds, particularly for Verticordias. He is now using this sand for striking cuttings although I would think a misting system would be a necessity under these circumstances. On-off watering and drying out would tend to compact the sand significantly.

The most significant event affecting the Study Group over the past few months is the launching of a new volume of the Flora of Australia on Goodeniaceae. It is written primarily by Roger Carolin with contributions from David Morrison and Tahir Rajput. I have enclosed a flyer to remind everyone that it exists. In theory we should no longer have any problems identifying our plants (unfortunately I am not sure it works that way!).

This is the first newsletter for the new financial year so I guess I should make the perennial exhortation for members of the group who haven't paid their subs for this year to do so as soon as possible. Remember the fee is \$5. If there is a little sticker on the front of your newsletter then I haven't as yet received your sub for this year. I had hoped to have a fully itemised income/expenditure statement for the year to give you, however during the year I have had to change our account from the Royal Bank to a credit union, Laboratories Credit Union, as all the banks are now charging monthly book fees. For a small non-profit organization like ourselves this basically highway robbery. Unfortunately as part of the process I have temporarily mislaid the defunct bank book so all I can offer at the moment is the statement of balance at 30/6/92 of \$133.60. There was a

refundable cost in joining the credit union of \$10.00 for 5 shares.

Apart from a letter from Joan Hales (see below) there again hasn't been a lot of correspondence since the last newsletter which is to be expected since I wasn't available to respond most of the year. I did however send some cutting material out to a number of active members. I tried a different technique this time using the so-called Stay-Fresh plastic bags. Apparently they are treated to reduce ethylene build-up and keep vegetable matter, etc fresh. I haven't as yet received feed-back on the condition of the material sent or the success rate on propagating from it.

As I mentioned above I received a letter from Joan Hales back in May. Joan has picked up some plants of *Goodenia viscida*, *Scaevola albida* "White), *S.* "Purple Robe", *S.* "Pink Perfection", *Dampiera linearis* and *D. diversifolia*. Joan is learning fast. She now takes cuttings before planting out, a step everybody should be following. It is far to easy to lose plants in that initial few weeks after planting. Joan reports mixed success from last year. *Lechenaultia formosa* "Orange" has now sent up suckers from the original plant which has unhappily deceased. *Lechenaultia biloba* is surviving with some afternoon shade (this may be the secret with this species - it doesn't like getting it's root system too hot). Joan has used a strategically placed rock to provide further cover for the root system. Joan has a plant of *S. candulaceae*, grown from cutting from Cuttagee(?) Lake, which has hung in there and may now be deciding to grow. *Goodenia ovata* (Green Cape form - prostrate) is growing well without any TLC so must be hardy and Joan has 3 seedlings of unknown genetics awaiting indentification after flowering. Joan informs me that her plant of *D. hederacea* has died possibly because of an unusually cool and wet summer. As she points out maybe it needs the hot summer to thrive and keep down fungal attack. Joan has gone to the trouble of testing her water supply for pH. The value has varied from 8.1-8.3 while the dam water was even higher at 8.8. Quite rightly she suggests that this could be a problem with prolonged watering. Joan has previously noted a strong ability to kill plants within a month during summer.

I had also had a query from a Dr Maciej Hempel of Plant World Explorations who has an interest in collecting and breeding *Scaevola* sp. I will forward their address to anybody interested.

It is a pleasure to welcome the Logan River branch of the SGAP as an associate member. The contact there is Kerry Rathie and he informs me that he (the group?) is growing a number of *Lechenaultia* sp including *L. hirsuta*, *L. biloba*, *L. macrantha*, *L. laracina*, *L. formosa* and some hybrids. This is a relatively impressive list, particularly for Queensland. He is also growing a number of the local *Goodenia* sp. (mostly unidentified at present) and about 25 forms of *Scaevola* sp. including the local *S. ramosissima* using low gravel mounds and hanging baskets.

In line with the policy outlined in the last newsletter, i.e. to endeavour to use only material collected under the fairly strict rules of wild provenance material, I have made approaches to the Royal Botanic Gardens through Steve Corbett, the Curator of Living Collections to set up formal access to their bank of material at Mt Annan. The idea would be for the group to have access to maybe one species or form for each newsletter. Members would then propagate and maintain the material, testing it in their garden BUT maintain identification and records under the accession code. The downside may be that all other material of the same species in the garden would have to be removed to maintain the integrity of the accession. If it is possible to send viable rooted cuttings through the mail that would be the quickest method of getting new species and forms into the system. I would welcome the thoughts of members on the idea. If it is possible I would like to start the process in the next newsletter. I have written a formal request to Dr Mark Sabio but have not as yet received a reply. I did find out however that there have been discussions with the people at Mt Annan, through the local Region, to set up living collections of specific study groups at Mt Annan, and that one of the groups discussed in this context was the Goodeniaceae.

Membership of the group is not exactly flourishing. Basically we lose some and gain some. Currently we have some 16 active members.

Membership

Current active members in the group are

Canberra

Geoff Clarke, 26 Henry St, Cook, ACT, 2614

New South Wales

Burrendong Arboretum, Tara Rd, Mumbil, 2820

Jonathan Lidbetter, 29 George St, Pennant Hills, 2120

Philip Strong, 6 Jetty Ave, Charmhaven, 2263

Queensland

Pat Shaw, 5 Fleetwood St, Macgregor, 4109

Jan Sked, P.O. Box 41, Lawton, 4501

South Australia

Ida Jackson, 7 Centenary Ave, Kingscote, Kangaroo Is, 5223

Gary Leske, 18 Leonard Ave, Port Pirie, 5540

Tasmania

Jeanette Closs, 176 Summerleas Road, Kingston, 7050.

Victoria

Joan Hales, M^cDonalds Rd, Glen Alvie, 3979

Rita Luff, 95 Seebeck Rd, Rowville, 3178

Margaret Randall, R.M.B. Tocumwal, 2714

Bruce Schroder, 17 Jubilee Rd, Montrose, 3765

Beverley Truscott, 22 Acacia Ave, South Oakleigh, 3167

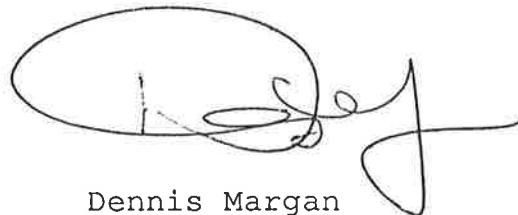
Western Australia

Mary Squire, Box 23, Mukinbudie, W.A. 6479

Overseas

Henri de Bono, 12 Allee des Chasseurs, 78230 Le Peco, France

Happy gardening

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Dennis Margan', with a large, stylized flourish at the end.

Dennis Margan