

Association of Societies for Growing Australian Plants Inc.

RHAMNACEAE STUDY GROUP

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 3

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S.G.A.P. QLD. REGION

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Hello again and apologies to all of you for not having compiled a Newsletter for such a long time. I haven't lost interest in the Rhamnaceae, but got involved in far too many areas after my early retirement from salaried work. This year, I've sorted out my priorities, the Study Group being one of the main ones. So, from now on, you should receive a couple of newsletters every year. Again, sorry about the long silence, and I hope I still have some of you with me!

News from Members:

Rachel Makinson has sent me two pages of details on how to find some good populations of *Pomaderris andromedifolia* (a variable but always very attractive species) in the Lithgow and Blackheath areas of the Upper Blue Mountains.

Merren Sloane has given me an update on *Pomaderris* and *Spyridium* species she is growing. Most of these plants are planted in natural bushland, in poor rocky soil, with some shade from eucalypts. Merren has *Pomaderris eriocephala* and *P. subcapitata* growing naturally on her place which is located in hilly country on the edge of Queanbeyan NSW. The following is a list of the plants she is growing.

- Pomaderris humilis* - nursery plant, 3 years old, 50 x 50 cm
- P. phyllicifolia* - cutting, 2 years old, doubled in size but still small, 25 cm tall, has buds forming
- P. obcordata* - cutting, planted 6 months ago, doing well
- P. elliptica* - seedling from coastal garden, 1 year old, no frost damage but needs extra water in summer, 20 cm tall
- Spyridium cinereum* - nursery plant, prostrate, dark green leaves, flowers well, 2 years old, one metre wide
- S. eriocephalum* - cutting, still in a pot in the shadehouse but is carrying flowers
- S. parvifolium* - nursery plant - planted 4 years ago, 1.2 m x 1.2 m, likes some extra water in hot weather

Merren adds compost to the hole when planting and mulches well with bush litter. She gives all the plants extra water during their first summer.

The state of the *Pomaderris* and *Cryptandra* I have growing on my block is as follows:

***Pomaderris angustifolia*:** a large and probably very old bush growing naturally here has appeared to be dying for several years, but, although most of its branches had died back completely, it has recently regenerated from the base and has also put out a little thicket of suckers.

- P. prunifolia:** Planted in 1993 in deep, heavy clay loam, it is now about 2m tall. During wet weather last spring, it grew very vigorously, almost doubling in size. Flowers well, pale yellow flowers.
- P. aspera:** Planted near the above, it is growing well but hasn't flowered as it is only just keeping ahead of the depredations of a local wallaby!
- P. racemosa:** Close to the above plants, this one has done very well. It is growing in a drainage line, a sometimes wet spot. It is now 60 cm tall - a dense, small-leaved little shrub, covered in buds at present.
- P. oraria:** In a raised bed of heavy clay loam, it is growing slowly and flowers rather sparsely. 60 x 60 cm.
- P. humilis:** In the same garden bed, it has grown steadily, more outwards (90cm) than upwards (60 cm) and is covered in buds at the moment. Has masses of clear yellow flowers.
- Cryptandra amara** var. **longiflora:** Originally a cutting from a plant growing naturally on my land, this little plant is flourishing in heavy soil behind a retaining wall. Covered in white buds all winter, it flowers late winter to early spring.
- C. scortechinii:** Also behind the retaining wall, this one is growing strongly. I'm attempting to keep this one bushy by pruning, as, without trimming, this species gets a bit leggy after a few years.
- C. propinqua:** An attractive local species, this plant was grown from a cutting. Planted in stony clay in the rockery, it has grown well and is carrying buds at present. We have always found this species growing on stony hillsides in the wild.
- C. sp.:** This plant was grown from cuttings from a northern NSW species. It may be a rather straggly, small-leaved form of **C. propinqua**. It has grown extremely well for several years in heavy soil. It carries masses of small brown-bracted buds all winter, followed by white flowers in late winter to early spring.

Field Notes:

After the Biennial Conference in Ballarat last year, Barbara Daly and I spent a fortnight travelling around Victoria looking at plants. It wasn't a specifically Rhamnaceae trip, but we did seem to come upon Pomaderrises, Spyridiums, etc. at every turn. Fred Rogers took us out to the Little Desert for the day and showed us a small patch of **Spyridium bifidum**, which I'd never seen before and which we certainly wouldn't have found on our own. We also saw **Spyridium eriocephalum** there. In the Grampians, we saw **Pomaderris aspera** growing to the height of small trees in moist gullies and, on the Mount William road, patches of **Trymalium d'altonii**. At Wilson's Promontory, we were greeted by **Pomaderris** growing along the roadside just out of the park, and found **P. oraria** and another species growing along the Darby River track. At Nyerimilang Park, we saw **P. aspera** growing amongst dense stands of another species **Pomaderris**. (not yet identified, as I don't have a

key to the Victorian species). Although I've often seen several species of **Pomaderris** growing in the same area, I've never noticed any evidence of hybridization, but I'm sure some of the plants there were hybrids. Continuing along the Princes Highway, we saw several species of **Pomaderris** growing along the roadside, and, pulling up for lunch along the Cann River Road, we found ourselves next to a **Pomaderris pauciflora** (a species I'd not seen before in the wild). This coming spring, I intend to return to Victoria for a few days each month to survey and identify the **Pomaderris** in this area.

Recently we did a short SGAP trip to the Bundanoon area. Although we only spent an hour or two there, we found a narrow-leaved form of **P. andromedifolia**, and, near the Erith coalmine, a small, twiggy **Pomaderris** with very silky, rusty hairs on the new growth. Unfortunately, it had no buds, so hasn't been identified yet. Nearby, at Wingello (on the tip road) there were extensive stands of **P. lanigera** and a short, bushy form of **P. andromedifolia**.

On a trip to Bungonia State Recreation Area, we saw several large patches of **P. lanigera**, and, near the Bungonia Lookdown just off the track, we saw what we thought was probably **P. angustifolia**. But, with a closer look, we found it had simple hairs on the upper surface of its leaves, not stellate ones. It appears to be **P. helianthemifolia**, but we'll have another look later when it is in flower to make certain. Returning along the Bungonia to Goulburn road, we found a shrubby upright form of **P. andromedifolia** (to 2m). There was also a large area of roadside covered with another species of **Pomaderris** attractively adorned with clusters of pinkish beige buds. This one doesn't seem to key out in the NSW Flora. Two of us have tried, and both of us came down to a group of three species which it resembles but obviously isn't.

Last year, we were asked to identify some plants on a property to the east of Queanbeyan. They looked like *Hakeas*, we were told, but the white flowers didn't look right. What we found was a hillside of **Discaria pubescens**! This is quite an uncommon plant, considered by some to be endangered. So, this was a real find. The owners intend to leave their bit of the bush as it is so this population appears to be safe.

Identifications:

In the last Newsletter, I mentioned a plant in Merren Sloane's garden that looked like **Pomaderris eriocephala** but had several obvious differences. This has now been identified as **P. subcapitata**. We have since found a large population of this species on the escarpment east of Queanbeyan. So now we have sighted all the species listed for the ACT.

Also in the last Newsletter, I wrote about a population of **Pomaderris** in Molonglo Gorge which keyed out close to **P. angustifolia** but had some differences. Peter Barrer, who had been doing a plant survey of the area and to whom I pointed

out this population, sent a specimen to Neville Walsh (National Herbarium of Victoria). He identified it as **Pomaderris helianthemifolia**. This is interesting, as it is listed in the NSW Flora as occurring only in gorges at Tia Falls near Walcha (Northern Tablelands area of NSW) and in Victoria. As previously mentioned, we think we have also found this species at Bungonia now.

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Membership:

Merren Sloane (NSW)	SGAP ACT
K. Rachel Makinson (NSW)	SGAP NSW
Dick Burns (Tas.)	SGAP Victoria
Jill Roberts (Tas.)	SGAP Queensland
John Knight (NSW)	SGAP South Australia
Klaus Querengasser (Qld)	WAWS
Kerry Rathie (Qld)	SGAP Tasmania
Marilyn Gray (Vic.)	SGAP Maroondah Group (Vic.)
Hazel O'Connor (SA)	SGAP SGAP Foothills Group (Vic.)
A. Stevenson/ R. Miller (NSW)	SGAP Geelong Inc. (Vic.)
Helen Morrow (S/G Co-ordinator)	SGAP New England Group (NSW)
ANBG Library	
Joe Stephens (Vic.)	

Something for members to do:

- Details or updates of any Rhamnaceae you are growing in your gardens would be welcome.
- Also any reports of propagation attempts.
- Please let me know of any populations of Rhamnaceae species you know of - with enough details to be able to find them again.

For a while I intend concentrating on **Pomaderris** (while not neglecting the other genera, of course!). I hope to be able, during this spring and summer, to compile a list of all Rhamnaceae species occurring in the ACT and surrounding areas - with enough details for any interested SGAP member to be able to travel around to see them all. I'll also be looking at some of the many **Pomaderris** species in the south-eastern tip of NSW and in southern Victoria.

This should keep us all busy until the next Newsletter, so good luck with your growing and keep the information rolling in.

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