

JANUARY 1979

Newsletter No. 2 is more a progress report than a newsletter. Since N/L No. 1, I have spent three months holiday in WA, during which time I was able to collect many stylidiiums (courtesy of Conservator of Forests, WA) which were sent bare-rooted to the active members in Victoria.

The survival of these has been variable, but one thing we have all learned (again) is that the recipe for success is different for all of us. However, we now have many more species than before, but it will be up to a year before all members have received all the species available. In the meantime, I would like all active members to give some thought to their participation in the study group. The question is, do you wish to try to grow all the species, or perhaps to specialise in one or more sections e.g. the rosetted group, with a view to trying to sort out the taxonomy of species from different areas, and of course to try to provide the group with seed? Please give this some thought and let me know over the next year or so.

#### NEW MEMBERS

Brendan Lynch, 11 Mildred Street, Southport QLD 4215.  
Alan G. Thomas, 23 Gillies Street, Ballarat 3350.  
Geoff Findlay, 38 Francis Street, Bedford Park, SA 5042.  
Wendy Bedgood, RSD "K" Road, Werribee, 3030.

Geoff has about 10 species growing, and has several years' experience. Alan has grown several varieties of *S. graminifolium*. Brendan & Wendy are newcomers (like me!)

#### W.A. TRIP

We found stylidiiums from Kalbarri/Murchison in the north to Denmark & Esperance in the south. Apart from minor problems such as getting bogged in sand at William Bay and infested with ticks in Cockleshell Gully (near Mt. Leseur), some of the highlights were: a purple form of *S. brunonianum* in the Murchison, purple *S. maitlandianum* near Mt. Leseur, magnificent specimens of *S. crossocephalum* near Geraldton, carpets of *S. bulbiferum* everywhere, and the pink of *S. brunonianum*, the yellow of *S. diuroides* and white of *S. piliferum* in the Darling Ranges. All these and more should be available in due course.

I had the most trouble identifying the rosetted group, and found two species that I couldn't key at all. Many species were not in flower, so it will be some time before we know how many species we have.

#### SCIENTIFIC WORK

I do not know whether the taxonomy of stylidiiums is being "updated" in any of our Herbaria, but research in other fields is going on in at least three Australian Universities. At U.W.A., Dr. S. James is studying chromosome counts, at the University of Adelaide, Dr. G. Findlay has examined the trigger action in terms of its chemistry and physiology, and in Melbourne, work is being done on the chemical taxonomy of Stylidiiums. If anyone is interested I will try to get details of publications etc.

## CULTIVATION NOTES

To finish this N/L, a few notes on members' experiences. Keith Alcock is growing several species in deep white sand (contrived) including *S. brunonianum*, *S. spathulatum* and *S. bulbiferum*. Hilda Crouch has *S. caespitosum* growing in heavy soil, almost clay, but thriving, in a well build up position. Lance Redman has a magnificent *S. soboliferum* in a pot, but another specimen planted in the ground died. I had a pot full of seedlings before we went away, but they all succumbed in the weird Melbourne winter.

And with that I'll wish you all a prosperous and successful 1979, and go back to preparing a bed to put some *Stylidiums* in.

Richard Davidson