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NEWSLETTER

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 new readers!
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Telopea truncata yellow form

Image: [Australian Plants Society Tasmania Inc](#)

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waratahflannelflowersg.weebly.com

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 are available
 here**
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**The Waratah and Flannel Flower Study Group is affiliated with the
 Australian Native Plants Society (Australia) - ANPSA**
 This is an **electronic only** group.
 Newsletters are sent out twice a year (electronic only).
Membership is free to individuals and APS (SGAP) groups.
 There is no deadline for newsletter contributions - send them anytime, sooner rather than later.

Maria writes:

The cooler weather has now descended on us and it's time to take stock of what is going on in the garden. Over the past month I have removed most of a large casuarina which was shading the waratah garden but was also sucking out all the moisture out of the soil. Competition is always a problem when planting in a garden. Unfortunately I will have also removed a fair bit of overhead protection. We'll see what happens this winter.

A few years ago my plants succumbed to an outbreak of scale which I just couldn't get rid of. I tried all the products I could find on the shelves but nothing seemed to work permanently. I then tried a sledgehammer approach and bought a spray can of Yates White Oil at a fairly strong concentration (150gm/L). Amazing! It cleared up the scale but didn't burn the leaves which I was afraid of. I have used this product on other species in the garden without any deleterious effects. (No I'm not getting paid for advertising - I just think some of you might be interested). I'd love your thoughts on how to deal with scale. I think mine was Palm Scale. I read that Mealy Bug is an early stage of scale.

The scale set my waratah garden back a lot but my plants are looking much better now and I'm hoping it will take off. Another innovation is to plant into large tubs with the base cut out. I fill these with potting mix to give my plants more soil in the early

stages. You can read about the experiment in this newsletter.

A while ago I bought some waratah seed on eBay and the instructions said to use camellia food around plants when they start to grow. That was a bit of an Eureka! moment. Waratahs grow in similar conditions to Camellias and Azaleas - acidic soils, lots of leaf mould, good drainage. There's no reason that fertilisers prepared for them wouldn't also work on Waratahs. I am now experimenting and would be interested to hear your thoughts.

As well as that I applied some liquid sulphur around the base of my plants to see if that makes a difference. My poor plants are getting the full treatment aren't they? But hey! That's what a Study Group is all about. I can't believe that we are still doing this pioneering work. Why isn't there a waratah in every garden? People are mad about them and would love to grow them but they don't have the confidence to succeed. I must admit more and more people are having a go so we're on track.

My local Garden club is thrilled at learning how to grow Flannel Flowers now. These are your typical roses and annuals people. They have great horticultural skills but lack knowledge about growing natives. We can make a difference if we try.

Maria

Seedbank

If you would like me to post you seed please send me an SAE (2 stamps required). Growing instructions are enclosed with the seed. I always welcome fresh FF seed for our seedbank so any contributions are welcome. Please make sure you add the date of collection to your packet. I am also looking for fresh Waratah seed, in particular *T. mongaensis* and *T. oreades* - must be collected off private property or in the garden. Unfortunately commercial seed is often very old and not viable. Collect in Autumn when pods start to colour up - need not be open.

Wanted!

Seed of *Actinotus minor*!

Can you help?

From the Members

Phil Trickett and Catriona Bate write:

We are having a long, autumn flowering with our Waratahs, particularly the one labelled *T. speciosissima* x *T. oreades*. It has been flowering for a couple of months and still has new flowers coming - see attached. Our *T. mongaensis* has also been flowering for a similar time. It's fantastic to be in a place where we can grow them.



Phil and Catriona's Waratahs in Autumn

Telopea Trials

Maria Hitchcock

My garden is on a rocky basalt ridge with very little soil but excellent drainage. It is very hard keeping the water up to my Waratahs especially during long dry periods. I use a lot of mulch but it doesn't seem to be enough. Some plants have managed to put roots down between the rocks and are growing well but others are really struggling. I tried growing some varieties in large tubs and they thrived due to the deep soil. I am now trialling artificial mounds using plastic tubs with their bases cut out.



Telopea Sugar Plum planted 28th December 2016

Height: Main stem: 14cm

Image: M. Hitchcock

The tubs are slightly dug into the ground, then filled to the top with plain Hortico potting mix with no additives. After planting I mulch with scoria gravel (available from Bunnings). The tubs are then surrounded with large rocks to hold the tub in place. I then spread a very thick layer of woodchip mulch around the pot. It will be interesting to see the progress of these plants. So far I have put in Telopea Sugar Plum and Digger. I shall provide updates as they grow.



Telopea Sugar Plum - large rocks cover sides of tub

Image: M. Hitchcock

Step by Step Instructions to Growing Flannel Flowers



1. Collect seed

Wait until the seed starts to fall away from the flower head. Put seed in an envelope and label with the variety name and date collected. Fresh seed will germinate faster than older seed. Seed older than two years should be discarded. Commercial packets do not have a collection date and are unreliable.



2. Prepare seed

Put a cup of tepid water (or smoke water) into a jar. Add a few drops of Wettasoil or equivalent. Add seed to mix, put lid on jar and shake. Leave to soak for 10-20m and shake periodically.



3. Sow seed

Spread a thick layer of seed-raising mix in a punnet. I use 1:1:1 coir peat, fine perlite, fine vermiculite. Commercial mixes are fine. It should drain well. Spoon wet seed on top and distribute evenly across top of punnet. Cover lightly with more mix or fine perlite. Spoon rest of water in the jar over the punnet. Place in a semi-shaded sheltered position. Punnet can be misted daily or placed in a container with water at the base. Label punnet with variety, date seed collected and date sown.



4. Germination

Germination usually takes more than a month depending on the freshness of the seed and the time of year. Best conditions are when the average temperature is about 20C. Seedlings appear as a pair of very fine grass like cotyledons. The first greyish true leaves will develop in the top of these.



5. Pricking out

Wait until the true leaves are about 5mm wide. Using a skewer carefully tease out the plant from the mix trying not to disturb other plants nearby. Fill a tube with native potting mix. With the skewer make a deep hole in the mix and carefully insert the plant then push soil back around it. Water carefully and place on a tray to allow water to drain freely. It is not necessary to use sand in the mix although some growers prefer to mix in some sand. Flannel Flowers tend to grow in deep sand in the wild.



6. Planting out

When plants are about 10 cm tall they can be planted out in the ground (if your garden soil is largely sandy loam). Alternatively plant three together in a large terracotta pot which is elevated to allow water to run out of the base. Fill the tub with native potting mix, insert the Flannel Flower plants and cover the top with fine white gravel. When plants flower you can collect seed, however successive collections may result in dwarf forms.



The Flannel Flower seedlings in the pot to the left have a nutrient deficiency which is why they are pale in colour. It has been corrected with an application of a foliar fertiliser.

Telopea aspera

Maria Hitchcock

All images: M. Hitchcock

The Gibraltar Range Waratah has proven rather elusive in cultivation. It grows in dry sclerophyll forest with a light overhead canopy and appears to form thickets near roadways or tracks where there is more light. Like *Telopea speciosissima*, it doesn't flower when there is too much competition from other shrubs. Flowering is best after fire when competition is minimised.

I have tried growing this species in the garden with little success. I did have a couple of plants near my shadehouse which survived for years but never flowered. Another trial in a large plastic tub filled with native potting mix resulted in spectacular growth during winter then when the weather warmed up the plant inexplicably died. I suspect it may have received an overdose of fertiliser in the mix.

Not to be deterred I have now planted another one in a large tub filled with my own mix that does not contain any fertiliser. I used a bag of Hortico basic potting mix (no additives), four scoops of Diatomite and four scoops of horticultural grade charcoal. I am keeping the tub behind my shadehouse where it gets misted daily and I measure the plant from time to time. I did plan to do this monthly but it never happened. The tub is elevated on a stand to allow drainage. Fingers crossed.



If anyone is growing this species, please share your tips with us. Some people have said it needs micorrhiza from the soil surrounding a mature plant but I'm not sure that's necessary.

Telopea	aspera	trials
1/1/17	7cm	Planted out
1/6/17	14cm New strong leaves at top.	Growth very slow due to lack of fertiliser I would suspect. Have now sprinkled camellia food around top of pot. The plant was also quite small at planting time - that could have made a difference.

Jim Mackay

Sylvan Grove Native Garden Picnic Point

April last year I wrote to you requesting some advice on planting times for *Actinotus helianthi*. At the time of writing I had about 500 good sized specimens. I agreed with your advice and planted out 80% in the following weeks and the remainder in spring. 99% were planted out at Sylvan Grove Native Garden, Picnic Point. So far the success rate has been excellent with most plants growing strongly and even putting on a decent flower show. The photos shown were taken just this week. Even though I've noticed signs of regeneration from past and present of this species in the park, I'll still sow another batch this spring to keep it all rolling. Well, I'm quite pleased with the results so far and once again thank you for your time and effort on the advice on the subject.



All photos: Jim Mackay

Checklist of *Telopea* species, cultivars and hybrids

Species:

<i>Telopea aspera</i>	Gibraltar Range NSW
<i>Telopea mongaensis</i>	Braidwood Waratah - NSW
<i>Telopea oreades</i>	Gippsland Waratah - Vic.
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	NSW Waratah
<i>Telopea truncata</i>	Tasmanian Waratah

Pink Cultivars:

<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Brimstone Pink' - Fire 'n Brimstone (Nixon)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Brimstone Pink Passion'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Shade of Pale'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Tutu'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Clarence Pink'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'In the Pink' (Yellow Rock Nursery/Nixon)

Red Cultivars:

<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Ballerina'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Brimstone Blush' - Fire 'n Brimstone (Nixon)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Brimstone Early' - Fire 'n Brimstone (Nixon)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Cardinal'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Corrakee' (Karwarra Gardens)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Fire and Brimstone' - Fire 'n Brimstone (Nixon)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Fire 'n Ice' (Roy Rother, Emerald Vic/Downe)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Green Bracts'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Mirragon'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Olympic Flame' - Mt Annan (Cathy Offord)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Red Centre'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Red Embers' NZ and USA
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Roger's Red' Gordon Meiklejohn (Brimstone Waratahs)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Scarlet Ribbons'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Songlines' - Yellow Rock Nursery , Winmallee NSW
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Starfire' Gordon Meiklejohn (Brimstone Waratahs)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Stringers Late'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Sunflare' - Mt Annan (Cathy Offord)
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Sunburst' University of Sydney (Offord, Nixon, Goodwin)
<i>Telopea truncata</i>	'Tasman Red'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Brimstone Princess'

White Cultivars:

<i>Telopea oreades</i>	'Errindundra White'
<i>Telopea speciosissima</i>	'Wirrimbirra White' (also marketed briefly as 'Shady Lady White' - naturally occurring <i>T. speciosissima</i> clone found in the NSW Water Board area by Thistle Stead. Link http://www.wirrimbirra.com.au/Wirrimbirra%20white.htm

Yellow/Cream Cultivars:

<i>Telopea truncata</i>	'St Mary's Sunrise'
<i>Telopea truncata</i>	'West Coast Yellow'

Red Hybrids:

<i>Telopea speciosissima x mungaensis</i>	'Braidwood Brilliant'
<i>Telopea mungaensis x speciosissima</i>	'Canberry Gem' - (Doug's hybrid/Canberry Coronet)
<i>Telopea speciosissima x mungaensis</i>	'Corroboree'
<i>Telopea speciosissima x</i>	
<i>Telopea speciosissima x oreades</i>	'Emperor's Torch' - Ausflora Pacific, Gembrook Vic.
<i>Telopea truncata yellow complex</i>	'Essie's Gift' - Brian Fitzpatrick
<i>Telopea speciosissima x oreades</i>	'Gembrook' - Ausflora Pacific, Gembrook Vic.
<i>Telopea speciosissima x oreades</i>	'Shady Lady Crimson' - Proteaflora
<i>Telopea speciosissima x oreades</i>	'Shady Lady Pink' - Proteaflora
<i>Telopea speciosissima x oreades</i>	'Shady Lady Red' - Proteaflora
<i>Telopea speciosissima x truncata</i>	'Sugar Plum' - Wild Brumby (Fitzpatrick)
<i>Telopea speciosissima x oreades</i>	'T90-I-0-I' - Proteaflora ("Shady Lady" seed)
<i>Telopea speciosissima x truncata</i>	'Nina' Col Terry

Pink Hybrids

<i>Telopea speciosissima x T. truncata lutea</i>	'Champagne' (Downe)
<i>Telopea speciosissima x truncata</i>	'Digger' - Wild Brumby (Fitzpatrick)
<i>Telopea speciosissima x mungaensis</i>	'Mallee Boy' - Wild Brumby (Fitzpatrick)
<i>Telopea speciosissima x 'Wirrimbirra White'</i>	'Dreaming' (Fitzpatrick)

White Hybrids:

<i>Telopea speciosissima x oreades</i>	'Shady Lady White' (original) similar to <i>T. speciosissima</i> 'Wirrimbirra White'
<i>Telopea speciosissima x oreades</i>	'Shady Lady White' (improved) same as 'Bridal Gown' (Downe)
<i>Telopea speciosissima x truncata</i>	'Snow Maiden' - Wild Brumby (Fitzpatrick)

Yellow/Cream Hybrids:

<i>Telopea speciosissima x truncata lutea</i>	'Shady Lady Yellow' same as 'Golden Globe' (Downe)
<i>Telopea speciosissima x truncata</i>	'Georgie Girl' - Wild Brumby (Fitzpatrick)

Related Genera

<i>Alloxylon brachycarpum</i>	Indonesia, Papua New Guinea
<i>Alloxylon flammeum</i>	Queensland Tree Waratah (Red Silky Oak)
<i>Alloxylon pinnatum</i>	Dorrigo Waratah
<i>Alloxylon wickhamii</i>	

**Can you add to this list?
Do you have any information
on growing any of these
species or varieties?**

Checklist of Actinotus species and varieties

<i>Actinotus bellidioides</i>	Vic (presumed extinct), Tas
<i>Actinotus forsythii</i>	Kings Tableland, Mount Hay, Narrow Neck, Hargraves Look out, Kanangra Walls, above scenic railway (Blue Mts) NSW VIC
<i>Actinotus gibbonsii</i>	NSW, QLD
<i>Actinotus glomeratus</i>	WA
<i>Actinotus helianthi</i>	NSW, Qld (Flannel Flower), VIC (naturalised)
<i>Actinotus humilis</i>	WA
<i>Actinotus laxus</i>	WA
<i>Actinotus leucocephalus</i>	WA
<i>Actinotus minor</i>	NSW
<i>Actinotus moorei</i>	TAS
<i>Actinotus omnifertilis</i>	WA
<i>Actinotus paddisonii</i>	Bourke NSW, Qld
<i>Actinotus periculosus</i>	QLD
<i>Actinotus rhomboideus</i>	WA
<i>Actinotus schwartzii</i>	MacDonnell Ranges NT
<i>Actinotus suffocatus</i>	TAS
<i>Actinotus superbus</i>	WA
<i>Actinotus</i> sp. Comet Vale	WA
<i>Actinotus</i> sp. Walpole	WA
<i>Actinotus whicheranus</i>	WA
<i>Actinotus novaezealandiae</i>	Te Wai Punamu (South Island) New Zealand

Cultivars:

<i>Actinotus helianthi</i>	'Starbright'
<i>Actinotus helianthi</i>	'Federation Stars' TM
<i>Actinotus helianthi</i>	'Parkes Star'

Ref: <http://chah.gov.au/chah/apc/interim/Apiaceae.pdf>