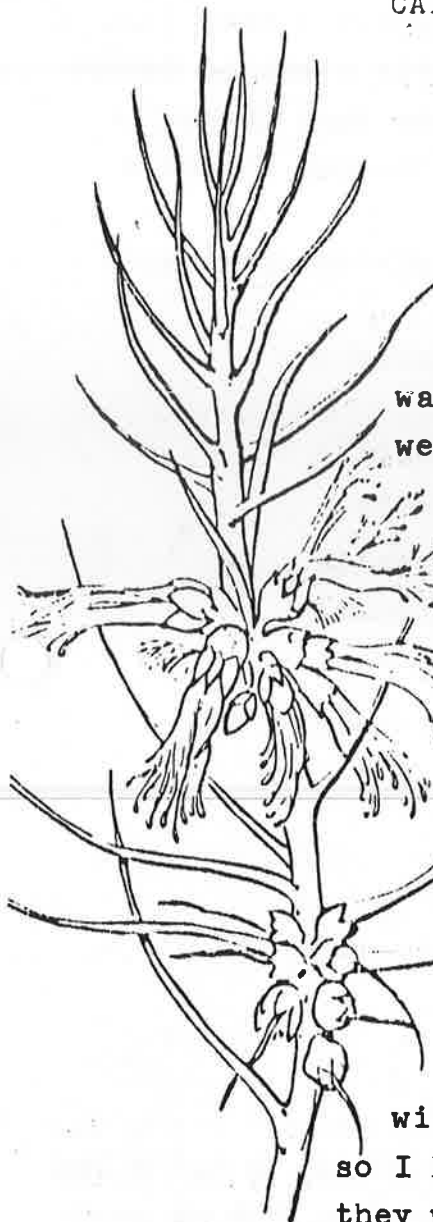


September 1991.

ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS  
CALOTHAMNUS & ALLIED GENERA STUDY GROUP

NEWSLETTER Number 15

Leader: Barb Graham,  
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Early in August I planted some Calothamnus seed which was nine years old, to see if it was still viable. The weather became very cool again & a month passed without any sign of germination, so I thought that the seed was too old. But they must have heard the first fantail cuckoo calling out as they germinated well just over a month after they had been planted. I will keep some old seed for a few more years to try again as it looks as if Calothamnus seeds will stay viable for quite some time. Also put some

*C. tuberosus* in, which have also germinated well, but such tiny plants compared with the other Calothamnus, so I hope I finish up with a few plants.

Looking at *C. tuberosus*'s natural growth area, I would guess that it would need exceptionally good drainage with no weeds or grass around. Maybe no frost as well, so I hope to get enough plants to be able to grow some where they would be likely to succeed, but also in some unlikely pots to really test its hardiness. Would someone else take a few seeds to give more variety to the trial?

I have received the records of the Beaufortia Study group & Beaufortia & Allied Genera Study Group, so my eyes are nearly falling out going through such a lot of information. I haven't finished yet, but have a few ideas on how we should proceed. One very handy bit of information was a list, even though pretty short, of seed suppliers who may stock some of the seeds which would be useful for us. I will see if these places are still in business & get some seed infor the seed bank before the next newsletter.

There have been a few new members join our Group, I would like to welcome them and already have a job for them. I have a list of Calothamnus species grown by our members, so if anyone hasn't sent this information in I would appreciate it as it gives a good picture of the areas where the plants covered by our Study Group are growing & how well. I will send a report

form to everyone as I would like to know if any of us have or have had *Beaufortia*, *Eremaea*, *Phymatocarpus* or *Regelia*. I am sorry but I have just realised that I did not make it plain that the *Beaufortia* & Allied Genera Study Group had stopped functioning, which is the reason that these Genera had been included in our Group, making the *Calothamnus* & Allied Genera Study Group.

There have been a few enquiries about rare & endangered species, so here is a list:-

<i>Calothamnus accedens</i>	<i>Beaufortia eriocephala</i>
<i>affinis</i>	sp.
<i>asper</i>	<i>Eremaea acutifolia</i>
<i>blepharospermus</i>	<i>purpurea</i>
<i>brevifolius</i>	<i>Regelia cymbifolia</i>
<i>lateralis</i>	<i>megacephala</i>
<i>lehmannii</i>	<i>punicea</i>
<i>longissimus</i>	<i>Phymatocarpus sparsiflorus</i>
<i>macrocarpus</i>	
<i>microcarpus</i>	
<i>pinifolius</i>	
<i>planifolius</i>	
<i>preissii</i>	
<i>robustus</i>	
<i>rupestris</i>	
<i>schaueri</i>	
<i>validus</i>	

Unfortunately I only have seed of *Calothamnus rupestris*, & not a lot of that, so I will try to obtain some of some other species, but am sending out a S.O.S. to anyone who might be able to get seed, cuttings or plants of any of the above. It is best to know the place where the seeds etc. came from. It is very satisfying to grow plants which are endangered in their natural home.

Graham Eastwood grew *Calothamnus rupestris* in his Gippsland garden for about 14 years (this is also called "Mouse Ears") so decided that as it is a rarity in gardens he would grow one at his present home at Batemans Bay. He planted the seed with many other seeds, & after some rain had seedlings popping up everywhere. About three months later he planted 3 or 4 of the healthiest ones into his garden & in the first 12 months they grew well over 30 cm with branches spreading laterally from the bottom. This is the normal growth habit of this plant. After 2½ years after the seed being planted & the top being pruned as well as a couple of unwieldy branches close to the ground being cut off, this *Calothamnus rupestris* is 75 cm high & 90 cm wide. Graham hopes it will have its first

few flowers this spring. I look forward to further news.

Graham also planted some *Eremaea*, which he found harder to establish. Very wet weather had a very bad effect, the branches sagging to the ground with some dying. But the survivors straightened up with the dry weather, obviously loving the dry ground. All of the *Eremaea violacea* were lost, *E. fimbriata* were erratic, but 3 were surviving, *E. pauciflora* was not as bad, with *E. purpurea* being the most reliable.

At the same time *Beaufortia sparsa*, *heterophylla* & *squarrosa* were also put in, with *B. heterophylla* behaving the same as the *Eremaea* but it has firmed up now. There are also *B. schauri*, *incana*, *elegans* & *orbifolia* growing in his garden, *B. elegans* & *macrostemon* remaining small for a long time but growing well even in the very dry weather.

Thank you Graham for such an inspiring letter, as I had started to become a bit dejected while reading of the difficulties in the old Study Group papers. One of the most interesting things was that the seed was planted in May & most of the successful seed sowings were in late autumn & winter. I hope I can get some seed ready for that time of the year.

I hope there will be some more happy stories for our next newsletter.

*Calothamnus brevifolius*: *brevi* - short, *folius* - leaved, referring to the short leaves which are the characteristic feature of this species.

If only we could get propagation material this would be a great garden species as it is a small, erect, much branched shrub with the bark splitting on the older stems. The short leaves are generally linear & crowded on the younger branches. The flowers are in groups of 1-5 circling the stems amongst the leaves or in groups of 1-3 scattered on the younger branches. The calyx tube is densely pubescent, showing its relationship to *C. villosus*. The 5 staminal claws are equal, deep pink with 15-20 marginal filaments. The fruit is sessile, generally depressed globular 4-5mm long x 5mm wide. Occasionally one of the lobes will be thickened, curving into the orifice. It is very rare, only known from a few places in the southern portion of the W.A. wheatbelt. It had been collected in the past from a much wider area, but much clearing has greatly changed its environment.

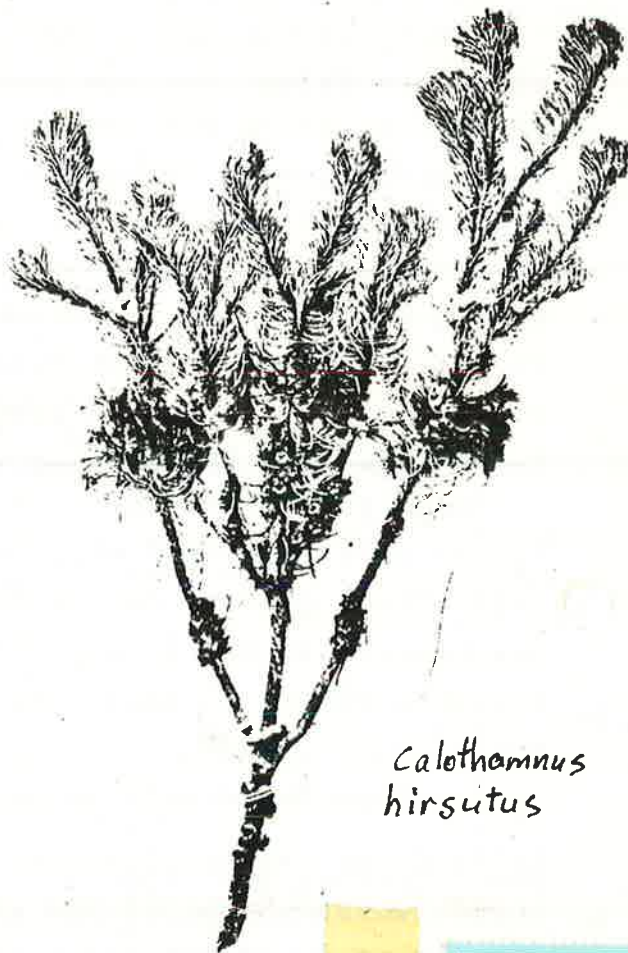
*Calothamnus hirsutus*: *hirsutus* - shaggy, referring to the spreading, simple hairs on the leaves. This is another close relative of *C. villosus*, growing in heath communities on sand plains with *Banksia*, *Eremaea*, *Grevillea*, *Hakea* etc. Some have been collected near swamps. They grow a bit inland from a bit south of Perth to east of Bunbury. Its thin leaves are 2-2.5 cm long whereas *C. villosus* are 2.5-3cm, glabrous or occasionally with a few scattered small hairs. The 5 staminal claws are a deep red, more or less equal & the calyx tube is densely pubescent.

The fruits are similar to *C brevifolius* but a bit larger, 5-6mm long & wide



*Calothamnus brevifolius*

Best Western,  
Barb.



*Calothamnus hirsutus*

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