

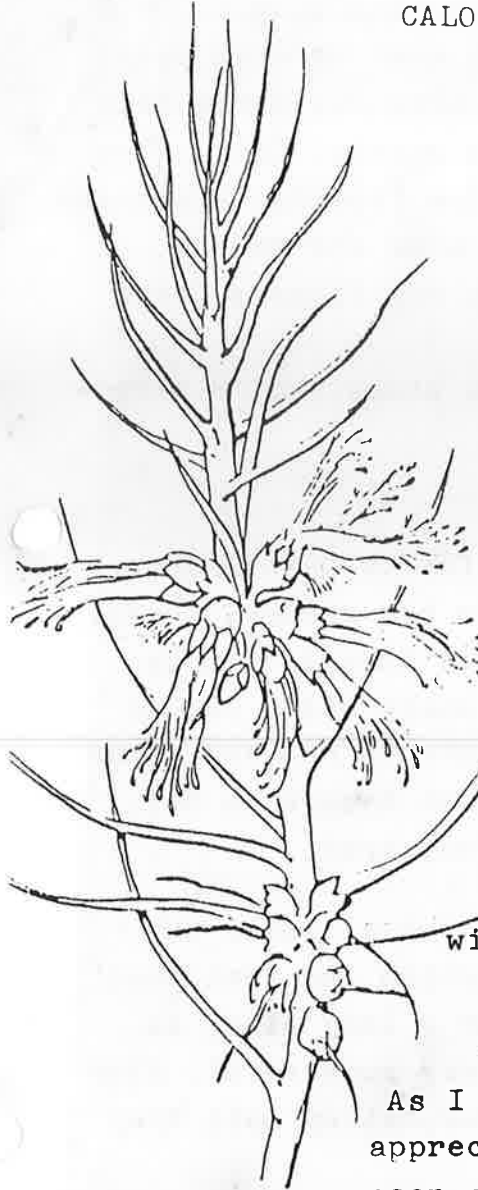
ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

CALOTHAMNUS & ALLIED GENERA STUDY GROUP

NEWSLETTER NO. 23

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February, 1996.



When I started my parttime job in the Territory I thought that I could organise my time to do all the things I needed to, but much to my shame I have fallen down badly in keeping up with the Study Group. So I wrote to Helen Morrow resigning as Study Group Leader. So if anyone in the Group could take over please let me know. Until we get a new leader I will continue to get the newsletters out so please keep sending reports and news of your plants (or others you know of). If we get a new leader soon I will forward these on as soon as I get home in July.

SEED BANK

As I won't be able to send any seed until July I would appreciate an addressed envelope so I can send them as soon as I get home.

Calothamnus asper

blepharanthus

borealis

chrysantherus

gilesii

gracilis

homalophyllus

pinifolius

var. quadrifidus

incl. " hirsutus

robustus

3 var. rupestris

(large, medium & med pink)

Beaufortia macrostemon

microtheca

orbifolia


sparsa

Eremaea purpurea

Regelia ciliata

inops

velutina

A note on the different varieties of *Calothamnus quadrifidus*.
 No 1. has fine, spidery leaves, no. 2. is the one most usually seen with dense, smallish leaves, no. 3. has terete leaves but seeds like *C. homalophyllus* (may be a hybrid), no 4. quite a special form, very floriferous and lovely red new shoots, no. 5 yellow flowers, prostrate in its early years, but developing into an open, wide and medium height bush, No. 6. very tall, upright bush, deep red flowers (seed bought as *C. torulosus*).
 7. Attractive broomlike bush , reddish new stems, no. 8 narrow flat leaves.

I received some great report sheets from Lyndal for 18 *Calothamnus* plants covering 8 species that she has growing in her garden. Lyndal lives in Queanbean so can expect heavy frosts, but luckily she is on a slope with some natural tree cover and has shaly soil. Raised beds of loamy soil are also used. This allows roots to recover after frosts or excessive rain. There has been some frost damage to *Cal. asper* and two of her *quadrifidus* but they have recovered.

I have tried growing *Calothamnus* here on heavy alluvial soil, but lose them to the frosty winters, even with protection and feel that it is because the heavy soils stay cold & wet for a long time, as those in large pots with a sandy mix have been very successful. Also at the Arboretum, only 6k away, but having lighter, stony soil they are doing very well.

One fascinating *Calothamnus* which seems to be able to withstand wet feet is *C. longissimus*, as the best ones I saw near Eneabba were actually in shallow, running water. but the creek was a sandy bottomed one, so probably did not have water in it very often. And of course I haven't been able to find out where to get seed!

Kerry Rathie lost his only *Calothamnus asper*, which was a yellow one in the drought. But he had better luck with a couple of *Calothamnus quadrifidus* which had been blown over, virtually flat, after watering but sent up vertical stems from several points on the original trunk. They are thriving and were flowering when Kerry wrote.

Graham Eastwood from southern N.S.W. coast has had a bad time with the drought, but *Beaufortia macrostemon* has been his only good reliable plant, flowering well in the spring. He still has some *Eremaeas* and *Beaufortias*, but these either didn't flower or had to be severely cut back so that they had a chance of recovery.

His *Calothamnus rupestris* still remains terribly hyperactive, putting on lots of growth very fast, without ever being watered, so he cuts it back twice a year. But it does not flower very profusely. It must be the very large form of *Calothamnus rupestris*!

Graham has had reasonable success with the seeds of the yellow flowering prostrate form of *Calothamnus quadrifidus*. To quote from Graham's letter:- I sowed seeds in Autumn 1992 -- no seeds came up. I did the same in Autumn 1993 and two seedlings emerged. This time again in 1994 I sowed the seeds in a polystyrene box with other seeds, and up they came by the dozens. At first I thought they were weeds! Anyway to cut a long story short I gave four away and kept three for myself. The latter three are doing very nicely at present. The two 1993 seedlings eventually were planted out and now they both have flower buds. One plant has just opened its first flower.

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I will be interested to see if these plants stay prostrate. Mine did for about six years, but during the next four years has reached about four feet high by about six feet wide, being a rather open bush.

After all the dry weather I lost two eleven year old *Calothamnus quadrifidus* (no. 2) but I'm not sure that it was only the drought which caused their demise as they had masses of weeds growing with them. But the *C. quadrifidus hirsutus*, *C. quadrifidus* no. 6 and the yellow flowered form all look good. Of the newer plantings on the steep, rocky hill the *C. homalophyllus* & *C. tuberosus* have survived well, but not grown at all. Lower down the slope *C. graniticus* has died after years of struggling with the frost as well as dryness while *C. graniticus* v. *leptophylla* has shot up well after looking as though it was dead too. *Calothamnus quadrifidus hirsutus* & quad. "Rhoda's Special" as well as *C. asper* and *Eremaea* are growing very well. None of these have had any watering, but were well mulched at planting (nearly a bale of hay each). The *Eremaea beaufortioides* has grown through the drought without a pause, becoming a very attractive open shrub. I will certainly be taking cuttings of it when I get home, as something as hardy as well as good looking is well worth having.

Quite some time ago I asked if anyone would be interested in grafting some of our species but had no reply. So I was very pleased when one of our new members, Steve Clemesha, said that he was interested in doing this. He lives on the north coast of N.S.W. which would probably be an unsuitable climate for some of our species, but luckily being on a well drained hill/some of the Calothamnus & Eremaeas could be successful on their own roots. We have members successfully growing our plants near Gosford and Brisbane. After a lot of rain followed by wind they lose some from being blown over, but as in Kerry's report earlier they can shoot up from the stems. He is very lucky in not having frosts. I have heard of our species being grafted onto Kunzia ambigua, but unfortunately, my memory not being too good, I can't think where I heard this.

I was away in June when I should have sent out our financial statement, so will put it in this newsletter.

When I get home this time I will not be going to work at Docker River again, so should be able to get a newsletter out then if no one has taken over as leader.

	30-6-94	to	30-6-95
Brought forward	\$292-74	Photocopying	\$17-00
Subs	77-00	Stamps	35-20
Donations	41-00	Paper & envelopes	8-94
Interest	4-66	Seeds	20-00
		Cash at bank	<u>334-40</u>
	<u>415-40</u>		<u>415-40</u>

Best wishes

Barb