

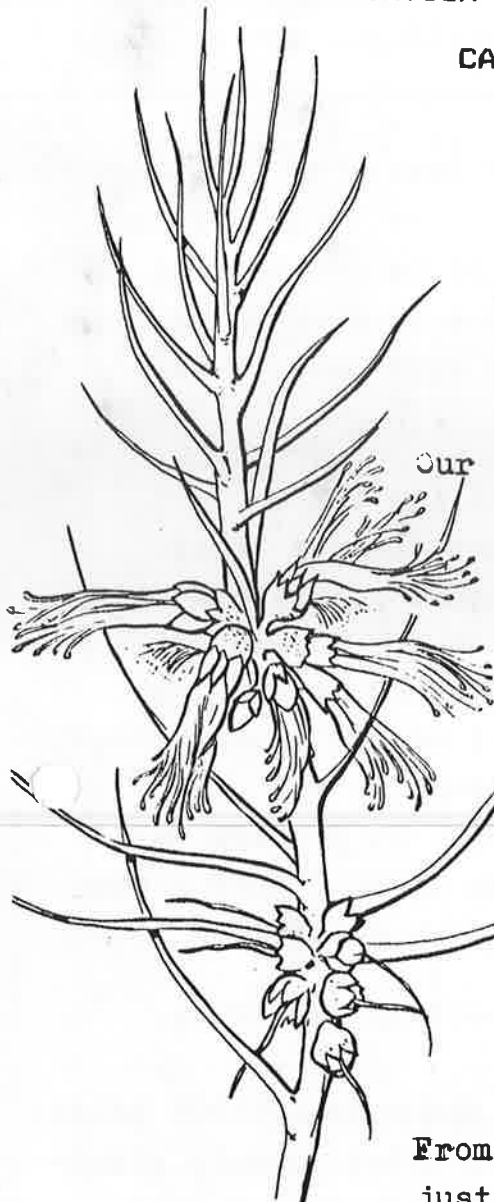
ASSOCIATION OF SOCIETIES FOR GROWING AUSTRALIAN PLANTS

CALOTHAMNUS STUDY GROUP NEWSLETTER

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Our seedbank has expanded so I will list the contents. *Calothamnus chrysantherus*, *gilesii*, *graniticus* var *leptophyllus*, *homolophyllus*, a prostrate form of *homolophyllus*, *pinifolius*, *quadrifidus* (including some of a very floriferous form), *rupestris*, *torulosus* var *leptophyllus*, *validus*, *villosus*.

If anyone would like some seed send me a self addressed, stamped envelope with your request.

As I have said before, *Calothamnus* are easily propagated from seed, but one thing I noticed this spring, slugs simply love the very young plants. So it pays to have a bit of snail bait handy.

From the reports I have received it would seem that just about any soils suit *Calothamnus*, except for the mixture of very heavy alluvial soils where there are extremely heavy frosts. In most cases well grown *Calothamnus* will recover after being frostbitten, but in the soil mentioned above frostbite is generally fatal. Actually Malcolm said that the Forestry Commission Nursery at Dubbo had trouble growing *calothamnus* in river loam, even with 50% sand. They have *Calothamnus gilesii*, *villosus*, *quadrifidus* & *chrysantherus* growing very well in red sandy loam.

Val has been having the same trouble as we have had at our Arboretum, rabbits! Unfortunately Val lost her *C. homolophalus*, but we wrapped the damaged stems with newspaper & are seeing some nice new growth. We have also had success with old stockings. She has a new *Calothamnus*, *C. graniticus* which has soft bright green foliage. It has not flowered yet and I have not been able to find anything on this species, so if anyone has any information on this one I would be pleased to hear. Another thing that Val was wondering about was if her prostrate *C. quadrifidus* would stay true to type if propagated by seed. This is

rather a tricky one, as sometimes these forms will retain their prostrate habit, but the only way would be to grow them by cuttings. But it would be interesting to try the seed.

Remember a few newsletters ago Rhoda mentioned her beautiful *C. quadrifidus* which encouraged so many honeyeaters to come close to her house. Unfortunately it grew a bit too vigourously & had to be removed. But she has a number of its offspring in other places & is sharing it with us as she has sent a large amount of seed for the seed bank. I will certainly be trying some.

Calothamnus gibbosus. (humped, swollen) 0.3-1 m x 1-2 m

A dwarf, spreading shrub with rather corky branches; leaves being about 8cm long, terete ending in a fine, long pungent point, and being glandular. The young growth is silky. Flowers which are a pale red, are in short onesided spikes, the bases in raised corky stems, the staminal bundles, of which there are five, are all nearly equal, about 2cm long. The fruits are embedded in the corky stem.

this is a more or less open shrub, not widely grown. It prefers well drained soil with partial or full sun. It can take light frosts & some coastal exposure. Being prickly it could be used as a protective plant.

Calothamnus gilesii. (after Ernest Giles, 19th century explorer.)

2-4 m x 2-4 m

An upright-branched, open medium shrub, branches glabrous (without hairs), leaves to 20cm long, terete, ending in a long fine point, densely glandular. Flowers are in clusters, generally well inside the shrub. Calyx and petals are glandular, the 5 staminal bundles are more or less equal and are bright red with golden anthers. The fruit is globular, about 1cm with the warty erect lobes being retained.

A very hardy species with reports of showy & insignificant flowers. It naturally occurs in very low rainfall areas, but has proved adaptable in many soils and climatic conditions. It is frost & drought hardy, but can be affected by mildew in wet areas. Useful for parks, gardens, farms or roadsides, & with light pruning is ideal as a low windbreak or screen.

Calothamnus gracilis. (slender) 0.5-1 m x 1 m

A dwarf shrub, branches glabrous, leaves to 10 cm long, terete, rigid, erect, greyish green; flowers in onesided clusters, the calyx more or less encased in the stem, the five staminal bundles are about equal, to 3 cm long, with 3-7 dark red filaments. The fruit is globular, about 0.7 cm, slightly immersed in the stem.

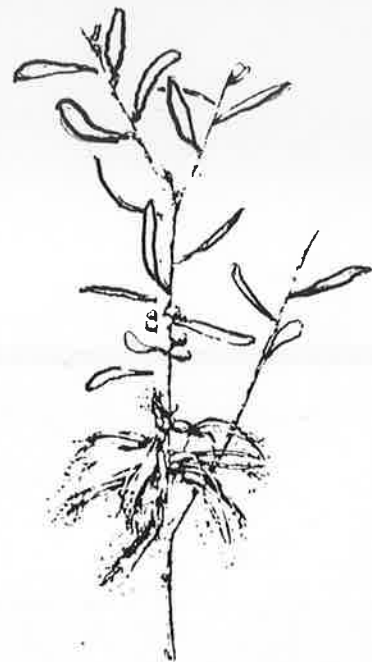
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This species usually produces flowers sporadically over a long period. It will grow best in fairly well drained soil, with dappled shade, partial or full sun. Tolerates light frosts and limited waterlogging. Maybe this species could be one to tolerate heavy alluvial soils. Best suited to private and public gardens.

Calothamnus homalophyllus. (even leaved) 2-4 m x 2-4 m

A much branched medium shrub, branches glabrous (without hairs); leaves to 5 cm long, very variable in length and width, flat, thick, tapering to base often blunt tipped usually glabrous, green. Flowers in onesided clusters varying in length, four staminal bundles being nearly equal, over 2.5cm long, rich red with gold anthers, rarely white or yellow. Fruit globular, about 0.7cm, smooth with 2 very thick lobes.

An outstanding member of the genus when in flower. It will grow in most soils, with preference for partial or full sun. Tolerates light frosts & extended dry periods. Useful for gardens, parks, farms or roadsides. Light pruning will create dense growth for windbreaks or screens. The white or yellow flowered forms combine well with the commonly grown red form. All we have to do is find propagating material !



Calothamnus homalophyllus. x.45

I hope everyone has a very pleasant Christmas and all the best wishes for the new Year. And of course a great and successful year of gardening.

All the best.

Barb