

## RHAMNACEAE STUDY GROUP

NEWSLETTER NUMBER 6

FEBRUARY 1999

Hello, members. It was good to hear from those of you who have written since the last Newsletter. Thank you. The local Study Group members - there are eight of us - now have monthly meetings to discuss what Rhamnaceae we're growing, identify plants and share cuttings and seed. This is developing into an enthusiastic nucleus for the Study Group. We meet on the first Friday morning of the month and any other members visiting here would be more than welcome to attend.

**Members' Reports:**

- Jill Roberts wrote to tell us about the response of *Spyridium parvifolium* to fire:  
Six months after a bushfire at Sisters Beach N.P. there was no sign of regeneration of mature plants, but, on the moist side of the hill, masses of seedlings had come up. (I have heard similar reports of sheets of *Pomaderris* seedlings germinating after fires at the coast and in the Brindabella Mountains near Canberra. JW)
- Jeanette Closs has written a welcome report on Rhamnaceae she is growing in her garden in Tasmania:

Our garden is on a double block which has a gentle slope towards the south-east and looks down towards the Derwent River at Kingston which is 13 km south of Hobart. Our soil is rather heavy (being over clay/basalt it holds the moisture very well) so is certainly not well-drained. We have put in many agricultural drains and built up beds, but there are many plants that resent these conditions so we are learning to avoid these and make the best of other gems.

*Pomaderris elliptica* which is probably ssp. *diemenica* and is endemic to Tasmania. Two plants, one 5 years old and the other 2 years in full bud. An attractive small tree.

*Pomaderris lanigera*, a plant from Jo Walker in March 94, has flowered for about 2 years. It is in a poorly drained area but seems happy. This medium shrub is found in Qld. NSW and Vic.

*Pomaderris obcordata*, a delightful tiny shrub native to Victoria and SA. I bought it from a local nursery but find cuttings very hard to strike as the wood always seems to be hard. Deep pink buds are followed by creamy white flower heads.

*Pomaderris prunifolia* - two plants grown from cuttings purported to have come from Warrandyte, Vic. An open spreading plant - not my favourite *Pomaderris*!

**Cryptandra amara** (prostrate form) - cuttings came from the late Kath Deery's garden in Ringwood, Vic. It has minute white buds and flowers, is a very wiry, tiny plant and a bit fussy about position, but seems to like some shade. Not easy to strike, but keep trying as it is an appealing little gem.

**Cryptandra exilis** - Marion Simmons from northern Tasmania gave me my first plant and I have struck a couple since then, but it is also very dainty and fussy about its location. It is a recent find, only described in 1991.

**Cryptandra (Stenanthemum) scortechinii** - is a plant that I have had many times over the years, but I keep losing them. Maybe it's short-lived, or perhaps it doesn't like my conditions. It is a rounded shrub to 1 m and has delightful woolly heads of white flowers backed by rusty bracts and flowers most of the year.

**Spyridium microphyllum** - a small shrub which is listed as vulnerable and is endemic to Tasmania. Not an outstanding plant, but I have two from SGAP friends and they are coping with our conditions.

**Spyridium obcordatum** is another Tasmanian endemic. The plant I was given recently has not yet been planted out. It is a prostrate shrub with wiry branches and white flowers in dense heads.

**Spyridium parvifolium** is a special one as its silvery-grey bracts are obvious most of the year. I have had it for 8 years and it is about 1m x 1.5m. It is probably of Tasmanian origin, but my records are vague. It is also recorded for NSW, Vic. and SA.

**Spyridium parvifolium "Austraflora Nimbus"** - a plant given to me by a SGAP friend 2 years ago. It is prostrate, dense and covered in tight bunches of white flowers and silver bracts.

**Spyridium vexilliferum** - I have two forms of this plant. One is almost prostrate with propeller-like bracts; the other is a small erect shrub with all its parts finer than the prostrate form. The bracts remain all year and are a joy, but again not so easy to propagate.

**Trymalium ledifolium** is a plant that I have had for many years but nobody else seems to grow it. It is a small open plant with largish panicles of cream perfumed flowers. It is from WA. And it strikes easily!

- Meanwhile, on the home front at Wamboin I have the following species now in the ground and growing;

<b>Pomaderris andromedifolia</b> ssp. <b>confusa</b>	<b>Pomaderris angustifolia</b>
<b>Pomaderris aspera</b>	<b>Pomaderris aurea</b>
<b>Pomaderris betulina</b> ssp. <b>actensis</b>	<b>Pomaderris delicata</b>
<b>Pomaderris elliptica</b>	<b>Pomaderris eriocephala</b>
<b>Pomaderris helianthemifolia</b>	<b>Pomaderris intermedia</b>
<b>Pomaderris lanigera</b>	<b>Pomaderris obcordata</b>
<b>Pomaderris paniculosa</b> ssp. <b>paralia</b>	<b>Pomaderris prunifolia</b>
<b>Pomaderris racemosa</b>	<b>Pomaderris</b> sp. <b>Bungonia</b>

*Cryptandra amara* var. *floribunda*  
*Cryptandra buxifolia*  
*Cryptandra* sp. northern NSW

*Cryptandra amara* var. *longifolia*  
*Cryptandra scortechinii*  
*Cryptandra propinqua*

*Spyridium eriocephalum*

*Spyridium parvifolium*

#### Feature Plant: *Cryptandra scortechinii*

This species is sometimes referred to as *Stenanthemum scortechinii* but has been returned to *Cryptandra* in the NSW Flora. It is a useful and usually hardy little shrub - bushy to 1m high and 60+cm diameter with small lanceolate dark green leaves. Heads of woolly creamy-white flowers cover the plant in spring, but even before that it is attractive, as it bears dark, brown-bracted buds all winter. These begin to form in late summer as bright coppery brown tips. It can become a bit leggy if left to its own devices, but can be kept bushy and shapely by light pruning.

A more floriferous form of this plant, called "White Mischief", has recently come into cultivation and is used in the cut-flower trade. Last year, when some SGAP members were doing a survey of plants along a roadside near Mongarlowe (at the top of the coastal ranges, about 10km from Braidwood), we found a prostrate form of *Cryptandra scortechinii*. Growing flat to the ground and almost circular in shape, it was a very attractive groundcover. I was unable to strike cuttings - the material was very short and woody - but will try again. It would be well worth growing, and, unfortunately the plant is growing right on the edge of the road and may well disappear next time the road is graded.

According to "Flora of NSW" (Gwen Harden), this species grows 'often on rocky sites or open forest on infertile soils' on the ranges and tablelands in NSW and Queensland, with rarer occurrences on the coast. I have two in the garden (one about 7 years old, the other 3 years old) growing in heavy soil in open positions. Conditions are fairly harsh - hot and dry in summer, cold (to -6°C) and often wet in winter, but both are in raised beds giving good drainage.

This species grows easily from cuttings of firm new growth. Mine bear a few seeds some years, but I haven't tried to germinate any.

#### Seed

I have a small amount of seed available. If you would like to try any of the species listed below, please send a stamped, self-addressed envelope.

*Pomaderris apetala*, *obcordata*, *myrtilloides*, *eriocephala*,  
*prunifolia*, and *aurea* (*humilis*)

*Spyridium globulosum* and *rotundifolium*

*Trymalium ledifolium*, *spathulatum* and *myrtillus*

*Siegfriedia darwinioides*

**Finances:**

Balance April 98			316.91
Subscriptions	88.00		
Interest	0.24		
FID		0.07	
Balance January 99			405.08

**Membership List:**

ASGAP S/G Co-ordinator

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ANBG Library

**Next Newsletter:**

The next Newsletter will come out in June and the **feature plant** will be **Pomaderris lanigera**. Please write and tell me your experiences growing this plant or about any populations you have seen. Contributions on any subject pertaining to Rhamnaceae, however brief, are welcome, so please put pen to paper.

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