

N E W S L E T T E R

PLANTS OF TASMANIA NURSERY AND GARDENS

65 HALL ST RIDGEWAY 7054 OPEN 7 DAYS A WEEK **

9am-5pm (Winter 9am-4pm)

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Dear Gardeners and Plant Lovers

Well, summer has definitely left its calling card - a well and truly **baked, long and languid** summer. Very pleasant for being outdoors, especially the magical evenings - BBQ's, Shakespeare in the gardens, running with a **happy dog** along the dog beach! Not a lot of rain but * Still, it is hard to have everything. All the time. *(*I know that's bad English, but it's my newsletter, so you'll just have to put up with it)*

And now autumn. My favourite season here in southern Tasmania. Lots of mild days and crisp mornings. Just great to get out in the garden and indulge in some vigorous work.

I, for one, do have to **venture forth into the wildness** of the nursery garden, and have a bit of a rummage. It's a bit unkempt out there, like me when I'm overdue for a haircut, **unkempt, but still friendly**. Armed with secateurs, saws, mattock, spade, stout gloves and compass, I shall disappear with a flurry, appearing only for meal breaks - I never miss a meal break.

Then, once the cuts and parries have been made, paths re-discovered and spaces recreated, then shall I (you'd never guess about the Shakespeare bit) **enter forth** with fresh, **succulent new plants**, whereupon I shall place these plants in positions of prominence, to be planted with a dash of Osmocote. (How Tassie's plants have survived all these years, without a dash of Osmocote is anybody's guess)

And so it comes to pass, that it is indeed a great time of the year for garden spruce ups. One has now **frolicked** in the summer sun. Now is the time to **energise those horticultural muscles** and indulge in a good autumn of gardening. The winter is then yours to nestle before the fire, content and well fed. And of course perchance should you be requiring of any plants.....

It just so happens that we **have at our disposal** - to be released, at a **suitable remuneration**, either pre or post gst (I'll use lower case - perhaps it'll go away completely) - an absolutely fabulous range of **beautiful new seasons plants!** The warm weather has brought them on nicely, so where-as we normally start autumn with the new plants becoming ready during the season, this year, they're nearly all looking wonderful now, and eagerly awaiting to be taken to good homes, where they hope to flourish, and flower profusely for many years to come.

PLANT SALE

Yes, we are indulging in another sale of stock, excess to our needs. (Last years fashions) The sale mainly consists of plants getting bigger in their tubes, and 90% or more will be fine, planted out or potted on - but they don't look as nice as our new plants.

Most will be plants in the square or round tubes - normally \$2.50 and \$3.00 each. On sale, this year, selling at **10 plants for \$7.50**. We will also be selling some larger stock at half price.

** Open 7 days a week, excepting Christmas and Boxing days, and Targa afternoon!

PLANTS SALE (CONTINUED)

Many of the plants will be large shrubs and trees, **eminently** suitable for screening and windbreaks. However this year there will also be a fair number of smaller growing plants including shrubs, grasses and plants for wet areas.

The sale will start on **Fri, Sat and Sun, 7th, 8th and 9th of April**, and continue whilst we have stock available (for many weeks, I would expect). As we did last time, we will not advertise in the press for the first week, giving newsletter readers first pick.

In summary - **From Fri 7th April - Ten plants for \$7.50** - select from the sales bench.

NEW CATALOGUE

Our updated catalogue should be out by the time of the sale, or shortly afterwards. Probably 20 or so new species on the list - some new to us and some back in stock after an absence.

We have fallen behind with our new nursery plants labelling, but the new catalogue will have our **Plants Rating** system included. The two sets of numbers are a quick guide to the **reliability** of that plant in the ground, and its **suitability** for pot culture (in both cases provided they are planted or placed in an appropriate position). The scale is from one, to ten. A high number indicates a more reliable or pot-worthy plant, a low number indicates **a challenge!**

We will adjust and modify the ratings if needed over time, and your feedback would be most welcome. (Expect two catalogues in quick succession this season, a pre gst, and a post gst with the price changes)

GST

Stands for, Gosh Something Tumultuous? Well maybe. Probably OK if you're earning an income and paying tax. We'll find out **soon enough**. Anyway, for those of you paying tax, the ATO will not bill you for quite so much, I'll be collecting some for them instead!

It's convenient really - at present, you can only pay your tax direct to the ATO or at a Post Office near you (I think). Soon, you can pay it everywhere! (well, not entirely true - we have been paying those hidden wholesale taxes here and there)

So, as from the 1.7.00, it looks like our plants will cost 10% more, and we'll have funny numbers, not the nice rounded off dollars and fifty cents's. I see a cash register looming - all these years, we've managed happily without one. Well, it's the price of progress I s'pose.

I do hope that once the Gosh Something Tumultuous has settled down, that it will be **beneficial**, and put **plenty of money** into the Government coffers, so that it can be **wisely spent** on schools and health; and I do hope that folks that slip through the **comfortable embrace** of the gst net, will be gently caught, and be adequately remunerated accordingly.

(As in that classic little Aussie movie, The Castle - *Tell him he's dreaming, son!*)

NEW PLANTS

I like this bit. The new plants add a touch of excitement, especially when we stand at the potting bench for days, potting on the good old faithfuls. Some of the following plants we haven't stocked before, and others we're pleased to have back in the system, and available in worthwhile numbers. As you will see they come from all round Tasmania. Starting with the smaller growers:

Isotoma fluviatilis Quite a widely grown, matting groundcover. We now have our first Tasmanian material, sourced from the upper reaches of the Derwent River. It can form a dense flat mat, in a moist spot, with pretty pale mauve-blue flowers in spring or summer.

Geum talbotianum **Tasmanian Native Geum** Boy, what a gem! An absolute delight when you come across a drift of them, nestled amongst weathered outcrops, in the wilds of alpine South West Tasmania. And that's where they like to grow best. In a pot they do perform well for a while, but they love being

potted on. Geum has large rounded hairy leaves and deliciously white, simple, large, four-petalled flowers. It doesn't look particularly Australian - more reminiscent of the northern hemisphere. (Still, we won't hold that against it)

It's actually, completely and utterly Tasmanian, from high mountains in the south of the state, not occurring anywhere else. I haven't really tested it in the garden yet, but it can look magnificent in a pot.

***Ptilotus spathulatus* Possum Tails** Another gem, this time from the cold and dry midlands. (In other references, known as pussy tails, but that reminds me too much of feral cats). This wondrous little plant has a rosette of flat leaves and produces numerous fluffy, creamy-white flower heads, each up to 10cm long, for most of the summer. Plants can live for many years, gradually producing a stout root stock. I still have one in a pot after about 8 yrs - unfortunately for it, when repotting it last year, after it had been heavily pruned by an errant rabbit, I noticed its fat little rootstock, and I immediately bonsai-d it! (Unlike in the human population, anything stout or twisted in the plant world in my nursery, is in danger of becoming featured, revered and bonsai-d).

Baeckea imbricata Now here's a turn up for the books. Some years ago, northern plant spotters, the Simmons, took some cuttings from a small shrub, north of St Helens. They propagated, and grew it on in the garden, later having it identified as *Baeckea imbricata*, hitherto unrecorded in Tasmania! Returning to the site, they discovered that a bushfire had somewhat altered the landscape, and even though now having made several trips to the area, no more plants have been found. Anyway, we do have some for sale this year. It's a small, finely foliated shrub, with attractive small white flowers in the summer.

Ewartia catipes Back to the mountains. This silvery foliated groundcover is quite vigorous in the pot. Endemic to Tasmania, it has small, low key white daisy flowers in spring or summer, but it's real value, is its foliage colour. Best in a cool site, but with ample sun.

***Herpalerion novae-zealandae* Sky Lily** Another mountain dweller for a cool, moist spot, with at least half day sun. Or in a pot. It's a slowly spreading plant with low grass-like leaves, and then in summer, what a delight to the eye! Sky-blue, six-petalled flowers of surprising size, nestle amongst the foliage. As with many alpine plants, probably needs that extra bit of care and attention to do well.

***Atriplex cinerea* Coast Saltbush** Now here's one for the salt spray, or for that matter in any warm, sunny well drained garden. If it's a dash of soft silvery foliage that you're after, this could be the plant for you. It will grow to about 1 metre.

***Convolvulus erubescens* Australian Bindweed** From our hot in summer, freezing in winter, dry most of the time, midlands areas, comes this little groundcover. It looks a bit like sorrel when young, but much nicer in the flowering department. The flowers are quite large, usually pink, and the plant should thrive in drier and well drained, sunny gardens.

***Gompholobium hugelei* Mask Pea** Growing in sandy heaths, especially along the east coast, comes this delightful little pea flowering plant. Large, pale yellow (sometimes brighter) mask-like pea flowers, adorn the foliage in spring. Probably requires a sandy, or light soil to do best, and I wouldn't label it as the most reliable I've come across, but if you get it going, you'll be delighted. (Ready late autumn)

***Dichopogon strictus* Chocolate Lily** And the treats just keep on rolling! We are delighted to have this little number up and running. Not only does it have the name, chocolate, but the aroma from the flowers, if not chocolate, can be vanilla! Anyone for an icecream? It's a small lily, leaves to about 20cm, with the mauve flowers, most attractive, on slender stems to 30cm. Should grow well in most well drained gardens. In some sites it may die back in the winter, but don't dig it out, it'll most likely pop up again in spring.

***Lomandra nana* Pale Mat-Rush** Midlands, once again. I'm surprised how many new plants we have turning up from the drier parts of the state. Looking nothing like its big uncle - uncle *Lomandra longifolia*

ie. Sagg - , the pale mat-rush is not only a light blue-green in the leaf, but also very small. In fact, to about 15cm. It's also very slow growing, but undeniably cute!

***Pultenaea prostrata* Silky Bush Pea** Nice name! Again, from the remnant vegetation in the midlands, comes this lovely, soft foliaged groundcover, with apricot-orange coloured pea flowers in the spring. It's rare in Tasmania, but won't be for long if I've got any say in it. I love the flower colour; and the plant itself, I would expect to be pretty hardy in a well drained spot.

***Triglochin procerum* Water Ribbons** Back in stock after an absence. It's a handsome strap-leaved plant for wet soils, or water up to 30cm deep. The flowering stems are erect, green, and quite striking. It's widespread in Tasmania, from coast to highlands.

***Villarsia reniformis* Running Marsh Flower** Available at last in some numbers, our own native water-lily! Well, with the leaves, anyway. The flowers are small, yellow, and on slender stems above the water to 25cm. Plant in water to 20cm deep, or in wet soil. It is widespread and abundant in Tasmania. (As well as these last two water plants, we have a good range of reeds and rushes that will grow in wet areas or in water)

***Richea pandanifolia* Pandani** Back in stock in the 3inch tubes. Beautiful! \$6 each, two years old.

***Glycine clandestina* Twining Glycine** Back after a long absence, the twining glycine is a light climber to about 1.5m, with a splash of lovely purple pea flowers in spring. Plant it near by, on a small lattice, or to scramble up a bush or over a log, so that you can admire its floral display.

***Melaleuca ericifolia* Jims Twister** A chance seedling from Jim and Sues' nursery out of Wynyard. Unlike your traditional ericifolia, this one has no inclination to grow straight and true, instead it loves to strike out wildly in all directions, so forming a spreading shrub. Expect about 3m high by 4m wide.

***Bedfordia linearis* Slender Blanket Leaf** This Bedfordia is endemic to Tasmania, with an interesting distribution, including the Bass Strait Islands, Central Plateau, and also in the south-east on rocky well-drained slopes. It's quick growing, to 3m, with silvery foliage and yellow flowers in spring. Its lower branches will die back as it grows, so probably best to treat it as a small tree.

***Eucalyptus perinniana* Spinning Gum** Nice to have this Euc. back in stock - seed from Hungry Flats, somewhere cold and dry. Not usually growing more than 8m, and tending to keep its rounded, blue-green leaves into adulthood. As the leaves die back on the trunk and branches, they spin in the breeze, and leave a delicately marked ring to show where they've been.

***Acacia retinoides* Wirilda** Not Tasmanian, you might say! Well almost not. It occurs on Flinders Island, from whence our seed came. *Acacia retinoides* has been a popular wattle Australia wide for probably 30 years. It grows quickly to about 5m, and is known to flower for most of the year. It remains to be seen whether the Flinders Island form will do the same. Perhaps it'll be better!

Well, that's your lot for the week! In fact, the season. With a bit of luck, another newsletter in spring! These, and many more plants, we now have available for your perusal. The extended warm summer has certainly given us a beautiful array of plants this autumn, in fact, so yummy, they're almost edible!

We look forward to seeing you over the coming season.

Horticulturally yours,
Will Fletcher and staff
P.O.T.N.